THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

EDUCATIONAL GOVERNANCE AS THEATRE: A STUDY OF INTERACTION UNDERLYING ALBERTA SCHOOL BOARDS' COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS WITH TEACHERS

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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research, for acceptance, a thesis entitled EDUCATIONAL GOVERNANCE AS THEATRE: A STUDY OF INTERACTION UNDERLYING ALBERTA SCHOOL BOARDS' COLLECTIVE AGREEMENTS WITH TEACHERS submitted by GERALD T. MCLEOD in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

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ABSTRACT

This study originated with administrative concern at the apparent inability of school boards to settle collective bargaining differences with the Alberta Teachers' Association without both parties seeking provincial civil service and/or legislative intervention. Field research methodology revealed data that induced the researcher to place a modified construction upon the problem's nature. This alteration was facilitated by a search of the literature concerning recent developments in the social sciences. The reconceptualization was aided by a recent critique of educational administration research's alleged preoccupation with general systems and structural functionalist organizational perspectives.

The study's original input-output model was discarded in favour of a framework calculated to provide insight on human interaction and the exercise of power in relationships. Its scope broadened to encompass the overall provincial framework for ordering decision making on teachers' salaries and other working conditions. Two metaphors, Erving Goffman's dramaturgic analogy and its game derivative developed by Lyman and Scott, were adapted to description and analysis of the Alberta education collective bargaining setting. T. Barr Greenfield's critiques of the standard research orientation in educational administration supplied insight on alternative analytic modes.

Basic data were collected through field research. The period of most intensive observation extended from November, 1973 to June, 1974. During that period research was conducted through participant observation at the Alberta School Trustees' Association's headquarters and with a school board regional bargaining unit. Research commenced six months prior to participant observation and continued until April, 1975. The latter comprised data collection through interviews, a survey instrument, document scrutiny, and media auditing.

Two basic facets of education collective bargaining were identified as resembling backstage and frontstage performance. Backstage interaction involved the provincial government, the Alberta Teachers' Association and the Alberta School Trustees' Association. Frontstage performance was associated with local and regional collective bargaining. Involvement therein by school trustees, school board administrators, and consultants, was analyzed using the ideal-type construct. Factors resembling stage, backdrop, and potential props were identified. Lobbying with provincial authorities was analyzed as exploitation game activity.

The study demonstrated the viability of organizational analysis in terms of the dramatic metaphor. It revealed education collective bargaining as constituting an imposed order. Provincial level interests negotiate the crucial control parameters. Power is wielded through control of school finance and Conciliation. Power is exercised at lower echelons but discretion is circumscribed. The order's effectiveness hinges upon the controller's capacity to induce commitment to its symbols and rituals. Disputes which appear irrational to the order's controllers are rational when perceived from the perspective of those at the school board level.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

"Why is it that school boards and teachers don't seem to be able to settle their collective bargaining differences without first running to us (the civil service) and the Legislature as soon as things get tough?" A senior official in the Alberta Department of Manpower and Labour expressed this perplexity in July, 1973. He was responding to a query concerning the nature of an education collective bargaining problem sufficiently serious to warrant investigation in this study. Comments by his colleagues in the Department of Education reiterated the need for greater understanding of school boards' and teachers' apparent unwillingness to negotiate with each other in good faith. Commencing in 1971, the increasing frequency of teachers' strikes in Canada provided the spur for interest by administrative officials in this problem.

Need for the Study

Their curiosity was not easily satisfied. Research on the process of collective bargaining between Alberta school boards and teachers was non-existent. The research dearth was parallel with the incomplete state of theory development with respect to public sector collective bargaining generally. In 1973 the most fruitful directions for this type of theory formulation had only recently been mapped. C. Brian Williams (1972:18) outlined new directions for this enterprise.

> We ask not: How can the impasse be resolved?, but, why the impasse? We leave the question; what are the alternatives to the work stoppage?, in favor of, why the work stoppage? We are more interested in the question; does collective bargaining contribute to the sharp rise in public service costs?, rather than, how can one control this sharp rise in public service costs?

In other words, Williams was launching a full-scale reappraisal of public sector collective bargaining as a phenomenon conceptually distinct from the theoretical formulations hitherto borrowed from private sector negotiations.

In the interim, educational administrators continue to cope with the adversary relationship between Alberta school boards and teachers. At their disposal are a limited number of options. For example, Department of Education officials may attempt to remain aloof. The School Act and The Alberta Labour Act vest collective bargaining rights in local school boards, while Conciliation is the Department of Manpower and Labour's responsibility. Eventually however, the effects of teacher strikes create embarrassment for the Minister of Education as well as the Department. The latter may attempt to coerce school boards and teachers into settlement with threats that their intransigence places their statutory bargaining and security rights in jeopardy. Alternatively, they may resort to pleas for good sense to prevail. That is to say, school boards and teachers are exhorted to realistically acknowledge their foolhardiness in sacrificing mutual benefits allegedly derived from cooperative behaviour.

Theory Development in Educational Administration

Williams (1972) suggests a conceptual starting point for research on this collective bargaining problem which is congruent with traditional research perspectives adopted for study in educational administration. He (1972:18) suggests investigation "of the physiology of the technique itself with particular reference to the appropriateness of current public sector collective bargaining structures." His structural-functional frame of reference is that which supports a substantial body of educational administration research. The latter's characteristics are outlined by Ianni (1976:11).

> Educational administrators have been socialized in schools of education to a tradition of educational research which was narrowly-deductive and purported to present inter-relationships among elements of a system conceptually independent of any given situation. As a result, they have come to expect statements of law-like regularities from research.

However, these tenets have undergone considerable critical scrutiny by scholars in educational administration since Williams stated his theoretical imperative in 1972. Deborah Hart's (1975:1-4) resume of the proceedings at the recent "Campbell Conference" sponsored by the University Council for Educational Administration indicates considerable dissent from former reliance on systems and structural-functional perspectives.

The conference was entitled "Educational Administration Twenty Years Later: 1973-1974." It featured Daniel Griffiths as its keynote speaker. Griffiths (1975:15) acknowledged as constructive the trend by scholars in educational administration to "revise and develop theories based on the most modern thinking in the social and physical sciences." Among potentially productive new approaches, Griffiths identified game theory, a variant of which comprises part of this study's conceptual framework.

Recent innovation in the social sciences requires elaboration prior to this study's problem statement. In the first place, the preamble facilitates placement of the study within a context depicting it as a response to criticism levelled against traditional patterns of educational administration inquiry. Secondly, a preliminary conceptual elaboration informs the nature of the problem statement itself.

Modern Critiques of Organization Theory

Much of the current polemic as to the relevance of theory to administrative practice has been generated by T. Barr Greenfield. He (1976:4) argues that an erroneous assumption "built into current organization theory . . . acts as a blind spot to exclude consideration of ideology and its function in controlling behaviour in organizations." In a paper presented in 1974 Greenfield suggests that the phenomenological and existential philosophical traditions are more amenable to vivid and realistic portrayal of organizational life than are models hitherto employed in the Parsonian systems tradition.

The roots of Greenfield's argument in educational administration may be traced to critiques of the general state of organization theory presented by Mouzelis and Perrow. For instance, Mouzelis (1967:180) offers the following advice on the basis of a review of literature on organization theory.

> Without disregarding the importance of empirical research, I believe that at the present moment, what is generally needed is closer contact of organization students with developments in general sociological theory.

Charles Perrow's criticism is more specific. In the preface to Complex

Organizations: A Critical Essay (1972) he urges formulation of theoretical perspectives that are less benign in their acceptance of existing organizational forms. In particular he suggests that power be elevated to a conceptual status that is paramount.

> Organization theory could benefit from a hostile perspective; it has been altogether too accommodating to organizations and their power. Students could benefit a great deal from more knowledge about the necessity of organizations in our present social system and their inescapably authoritarian character.

The "hostile" perspective that invests primacy in the concept of power would, in Dahrendorf's (1968:150) estimation, yield explanations more general, more informative, and more plausible, than those hitherto possible within the equilibrium frame of reference characterizing systems theory. Its importance is reiterated by Crozier (1973:20-21).

> The concept of power is central to the social sciences. Phenomena of power always accompany all processes of social integration, and these are one of the subjects, if not the essential subject, of study in sociology . . . no concrete relationship between either individuals or groups is free of issues of power.

The importance and validity of this assertion notwithstanding, the nature of the phenomenon of power is such as to pose methodological complexities of the highest order. To its imprecision and ambiguity, for example, Crozier (1973:21) attributes the empiricists' avoidance of the concept. Its vagueness and its contradictions, he alleges, "stem not from the uncertainty of the word 'power' but from the ambiguity of the facts of power themselves."

These "facts of power" have resisted definition partly because the word "power" lacks a verb form. Consequently, it induces theorizing in terms of attributes when utilized in a systems frame of reference. Wrong

(1968) argues that its more appropriate dimension involves relationships. Crozier (1973:27) supports this contention, but observes that the overall organizational setting is the appropriate venue for examining the exercise of power in relationships.

> To understand the basic elements and dynamics of power negotiations, one must focus on the overall organization serving as their framework. Power then appears no longer merely as a relationship but as a process inseparable from the organizational process. The terms of exchange result neither from chance nor from some abstract and theoretical balance of power. They are the results of a game whose constraints create compulsory hurdles and opportunities for manipulation for the players . . . .

The research implications for educational administration of these two writer's points of view require renunciation of a preoccupation with differentiation between power types. In its place, strategic analysis of interaction processes between individuals and groups becomes a matter of vital concern.

New Research Directions in Educational Administration

The structural-functional perspective shaped Williams' (1972) interpretation of the collective bargaining problem as one requiring a delineation of structures. The alternative sociological perspective also imposes its unique stamp upon this study's problem formulation. That is to say, the structural-functionalist is lead by theory to identify a particular phenomenon as a problem arising from certain structural inadequacies that, once identified, may be corrected. On the other hand, this study examines the same phenomenon from a different conceptual perspective. Its primary focus is the exercise of power in a collective bargaining setting comprising part of a larger chain of interaction processes.

The research perspective renders the notion of structure itself, problematic and a subject in the inquiry. Decision making processes at various levels in the overall education organization are scrutinized. These processes presumably demonstrate the way in which power is wielded in education. Their examination is assumed prerequisite to understanding education collective bargaining structures and the constraints that different participants perceive therein.

THE PROBLEM

Particular types of data are required for research that probes the experience of organizational life. Therefore, the research problem and sub-problems were shaped in this study by its basic conceptual orientation.

Qualitative and quantitative data were both required in order to fully expand on the subjective constructions which were rendered by participants in the Alberta education collective bargaining setting. Greenfield (1974:34-35) describes the task as the isolation of "internal" as well as "external" variables. The former include evidence "which may only be expressed through the interpretation of experience." In this study "internal variables" pertain to the quality of relationships manifested between participants in education collective bargaining related activity. On the other hand, "external variables" include documentation of the basic elements of the social situations in which this activity is pursued. The basic challenge in this type of research extends to the construction of an account that synthesizes both categories of evidence. Dahrendorf (1968: 138) identifies the challenge's essential elements as a need for "imaginative" formulation combined with "precision of craftsmanship."

Inner and outer perspectives were melded in this study utilizing constructs borrowed from the arts and from the sociological discipline. The former provided the basis for description by analogy. This study's account relies on the dramaturgic metaphor, the use of which is characteristically associated with Erving Goffman's writings. Metaphorical allusion to the collective bargaining participants' game-like interaction also incorporates Lyman and Scott's sociological framework. Max Weber's contribution to the general field of sociology influenced the problem format. The latter was constructed in such a way as to supply observations germane to typology construction. The ideal-type construct, in Greenfield's (1974:31) estimation, enhances the calibre of images contained in educational administration studies. He cites Weber's reference to its value as facilitating accumulation of "one-sided viewpoints", each casting "shafts of light" (Eldridge 1971:12) and thus revealing social reality. This study's problem statement was calculated to shed illumination on the processes underlying Alberta school board collective bargaining. It proposed clarification on the basis of reconnaissance at various vantage points within the Alberta education collective bargaining setting.

Statement of the Problem

Generally stated, the purpose of this study was to probe the interaction processes that underly the completion of formal collective agreements between school boards and the Alberta Teachers' Association. Particular emphasis was placed upon investigating the extent and nature of involvement of school trustees, administrators employed by school boards and their provincial association, as well as consultants hired by school boards, in the decision making processes that comprise the overall organization of education collective bargaining in Alberta.

Sub-problems--External Variables

1. Which individuals and groups were noteworthy for their participation in the general education collective bargaining sphere?

2. What basic formal structures characterized the overall organization of collective bargaining between school boards and the Alberta Teachers' Association?

3. What political, economic, and social phenomena were discernable in the general environment within which school boards and the Alberta Teachers' Association negotiate collective agreements?

Sub-problems--Internal Variables

1. What interaction characteristics were manifest in decision-making processes involving individuals and groups within particular collective bargaining participant categories such as local school boards and the Alberta School Trustees' Association?

2. What interaction characteristics typified relationships between collective bargaining categories such as the provincial government, the Alberta Teachers' Association, and the Alberta School Trustees' Association?

GLOSSARY OF TERMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Conciliation:	The dispute settlement mechanism outlined in The Alberta Labour Act to which school boards and the ATA are required to submit before exercising the right to lockout or strike.

Conciliation Officer:	The Conciliation Officer (or Conciliator) is appointed by the Minister of Manpower and Labour to investigate and report on collective bargaining disputes. The officer may attempt to reconcile the dispute under investigation.
Conciliation Board:	A tripartite tribunal established under terms articulated in The Alberta Labour Act, the conciliation board constitutes a possible second step in the process designed to investigate and report publicly the facts of a collective bargaining dispute.
Memorandum of Agreement:	A memorandum of agreement is the agreement reached between bargaining table parties, but which requires endorsement by the authorities for whom negotiations are being conducted.
Metro Boards:	This term identifies the public and separate school boards located in Edmonton and Calgary. The term has no legal status in Alberta but is used in conversation.
Opinion Survey:	The questionnaires located in Appendix A were administered to trustees and school administrators attending school board meetings in six jurisdictions and whose respective boards were observed bargaining as an employers' association.
Ratification:	A ratification vote is taken by the authority duly constituted to endorse or reject a memorandum of agreement.
Reopening:	This term was employed in common parlance during 1973 and 1974 with reference to initiatives to depart from terms and conditions previously agreed for the second year of two-year term collective agreements.
Stagflation:	Economists and commentators employed the term to describe a situation where high rates of inflation continued in spite of the persistently high rates of employment and declining rates of growth in gross national product.
ASTA:	The Alberta School Trustees' Association
ATA:	The Alberta Teachers' Association
BIR:	The Board of Industrial Relations

COLA: Cost of Living Adjustment

CPI: Consumer Price Index

SAA: School Authorities Association

SFPP: School Foundation Program Plan

Delimitations

The scope of participant observation in the collective bargaining setting suffers from constraints inherent in the methodology and in the research setting. In the first place, statistical information which might have been valuable as the result of a province-wide survey of school boards was not collected. Secondly, the number of interview respondants was confined to those who were adjudged to be knowledgeable in particular facets of collective bargaining, or otherwise were encountered on an ad hoc basis during field research.

The study was confined primarily to exploration of the school board perspective on education collective bargaining. That is to say, references to this subject by government officials or employees of the Alberta Teachers' Association were gleaned from the media or collected in chance encounters during the study's course.

These strategies were dictated by the nature of collective bargaining, as well as by the limited time and fiscal resources available to the single researcher. The choice to delimit the study to school board perspectives is supported by Donald Roy's experience with field research in labour relations matters. Roy (1970:216-244) insists on the need for the researcher to circumscribe the extent of such inquiry. He contends that the participant observer cannot optimize opportunities to win the confidence of research subjects, while simultaneously operating with 'one foot in each camp'. Inevitably, he suggests, a point is reached in collective bargaining where neither party can be expected to place trust in the individual who is privy to the other's secrets. In accordance with Roy's conclusions the current study diminished the teachers' perspective on collective bargaining, in favour of an opportunity to closely scrutinize that manifested by Alberta school trustees and those who assist them in negotiating collective agreements.

Limitations

During the period in which participant observation was pursued namely, September of 1973 through May of 1974, only 40 per cent (approximately) of teachers employed by Alberta school boards held membership in locals for which new contracts were under negotiation. Of the remainder, the overwhelming proportion were employed under the terms and conditions of two-year contracts negotiated with three of the four school boards located in Edmonton and Calgary. Consequently, the interaction reported in this study is drawn from a milieu in which collective bargaining by large urban jurisdictions was difficult to observe. The situation was ameliorated to an extent by the considerable discussion surrounding the issue of whether teachers employed under two-year contracts should be allowed to reopen negotiations in the face of unanticipated escalation in the cost-of-living.

The limitations and delimitations potentially definable for this study are considerable. The research setting's expanse, the researcher's limited resources, and the relatively incomplete formulation of the study's conceptual framework, render this situation virtually unavoidable. In Chapter 2 and Chapter 3 emphasis is placed upon the researcher's deliberate self-consciousness as a major device for combatting ethnocentrism.

Failing this strategy's infallibility, Alvin Gouldner's volume, For Sociology (1973) offers solace in the form of a plea for departure from culturally standardized patterns of investigation. In Gouldner's (1973:321-322) opinion, while such enterprise courts disaster, the untoward effects are mitigated in view of potential gains with respect to sociological insight and the researcher's self-awareness. He writes:

> The culturally standardized role of the sociologist, like any other social role, can be thought of as a 'bridge'--both facilitating and limiting certain tasks, enabling men to overcome certain obstacles, and to get to the 'other side'. But social roles are always unfinished bridges and invariably incomplete; they reach out only part way across the void. It is their incompleteness that is the eternal problem, and thus even those who love and respect the bridge cannot entirely rely upon it to get them safely across.
>
> There are a limited number of attitudes one can adopt toward the situation. For example, some men say: so be it; if this is the way of bridges then we must learn to live with them as they are. They will parade back and forth along the completed section of the bridge, sometimes dangling their feet over the unfinished edge, looking down. Other men say 'We must be grateful for whatever we have and, repaying those who built it, we must continue working, each adding his own little plank to the unfinished end;' occasionally resting at the edge, they may dangle their feet over it. In both cases, one is bound to have something of a tragic sense, a sad whimsical wish that things were not like that.
>
> But there is another possibility. One thing is certain a man might feel: the building of this bridge will never be completed, but my life will surely have its end. A man might therefore risk a running leap from the unfinished edge to the shore that he sees ahead. Perhaps he has seen right and has estimated his own powers correctly. In which event, applause. Perhaps he has badly miscalculated on both counts. In which case a certain dampness sets in. Maybe he can swim back to safety, even if somewhat less than applauded. In any event, he has found out how far he can see and how well he can jump. Even if he is never heard from again, perhaps those who are still dawdling at the edge will learn something useful.

This study may not correspond in conceptual profundity to the "running leap" that Gouldner countenances. Nevertheless, the researcher's experience in exploring beyond the positivist mode has been such as to attest to the authenticity of his assertion concerning salvagable benefits.

Outline of the Organization of the Study's Findings

Chapter 2 outlines the general parameters of the study's conceptual framework. It is organized around three constituent parts of a scientific paradigm as defined by Thomas Kuhn (1962). These components are theory, methodology and standards of verification. This study's alternative paradigm is compared and contrasted with the formerly dominant Parsonian-oriented systems paradigm. The third chapter is a conceptual extension of the second. Its contents comprise two basic themes. The first involves the researcher's explication of his "background expectancies" which contributed to his approach to the study and the analysis of its data. The second concerns an elaboration of the study's natural history and includes an overview of strategies entailed in the data collection task.

The theatrical metaphor, insofar as it applies in description of education collective bargaining, is elaborated in the succeeding five chapters. Chapter 4 and Chapter 5 focus on backstage identities and their interaction. In the former, the role of Alberta government officials in education collective bargaining organization is posited as being comparable with the activities of producer, directors, and other stage managers, responsible for staging a theatrical production. The latter chapter conceptualizes the Alberta School Trustees' Association as acting in the capacity of theatrical agent on the behalf of school boards.

Chapter 6 examines, in greater detail, the Association's internal dynamics and its effectiveness as an intermediary between school boards and the provincial government.

The frontstage dimensions of the dramaturgic metaphor are outlined in Chapter 7 and Chapter 8. The collective bargaining environment is presumed to resemble a theoretical venue as well as the stage backcloth. These are described in the first of the two chapters. Chapter 8 is devoted to a typology of collective bargaining performances characteristically encountered in school board organizations.

In Chapter 9, game-like interaction between backstage participants is the focus of analysis. Political interest group activity by the Alberta School Trustees' Association and the Alberta Teachers' Association for the purpose of increasing provincial education funding is the subject of analysis. The exploitation game segment of Lyman and Scott's (1970) game framework supplies the basic analytic mode.

The study's salient features are reviewed in the final chapter. An overview of the dramaturgic and game models insofar as they are relevant to the Alberta education collective bargaining setting is presented. The chapter concludes with a number of propositions concerning the nature of an imposed order that is exemplified in the organization of collective bargaining between school boards and the Alberta Teacher's Association. These propositions are supplemented by suggestions as to the means by which their ramifications might be further explored.

CHAPTER II

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

The Concept of a Scientific Paradigm

Subsequent to publication of Thomas Kuhn's The Structure of Scientific Revolutions (1962), a discussion in the social sciences intensified with regard to the sociology of knowledge. Kuhn popularized the term 'paradigm', in conjunction with the notion that truth remains contingent upon consensus within an intellectual community. Phillips (1971:131) describes the implications of this consensus.

> Kuhn argues that in every discipline there is a shared paradigm which commits its practitioners to the same rules and standards for scientific practice; in a sense, such paradigms provide a discipline's practitioners with a kind of map.

Of itself, the 'map' allusion is inadequate to the task of conveying a paradigm's precise nature. Proceeding further, Kuhn (1962:108) explains that paradigms:

> . . . provide scientists not only with a map but also with some of the directions essential for map-making. In learning a paradigm the scientist acquires theory, methods, and standards together, usually in an inextricable mixture.

The current study therefore, inherits from its chosen paradigm its own unique 'inextricable mixture' of 'theory, methods and standards'. This particular paradigm is at variance with the dominant paradigm of sociology, that which Mullins (1973) labels "Standard American Sociology:

Faith of Our Fathers Living Still . . . ." Consequently, clarification upon its mixture of components is essential. Unfortunately, the paradigm is in its formative stage. Therefore, explanatory effect must be attempted through comparison and contrast with generally recognizable features of the dominant paradigm.

I THEORY

According to Kuhn's conceptualization of the intellectual paradigm, theories are nothing more than metaphors. Essentially they are comprised of two basic elements. These are identified in Mullins' (1973:5) definition.

> Theories are productions (in any form, but usually written) that attempt to analyze and generalize about interaction of human beings, using a set of concepts and/or variables whose relations are governed by specific rules for theory building. . . . A theory is a statement that is an acceptable general principle to some group (Ziman 1968). That important group is usually the scientists who can read and respond to what another scientist has written. (Mullins' emphasis)

The definition represents an expanded form of Kuhn's (1962:x) assertion that theories are "universally recognizable scientific achievements that for a time provide model problems and solutions to a community of practitioners." During the nineteen sixties and nineteen seventies the consensus over problems and solutions in the social science community has weakened considerably. Until 1965 approximately, the consensus remained relatively secure. Its focal point was the synthesis of theoretical traditions that Friedrichs (1970) labels structural-functionalism. Subsequently, manifestations of a strong reaction against the structural-functionalist positivist orientation have emerged in the social sciences. The investigation of language and meaning are suggested as more relevant subjects of concern for sociologists. This theme is typified in the title of Cicourel's Cognitive Sociology (1973).

The net outcome of the ensuing polemic will perhaps not reveal greater truth of one or the other theoretical approach. It is valuable in that it illustrates the elusiveness of theoretical certainty in the social sciences. The point is emphasized by Nieburg (1973:10).

> In effect, the whole vision of truth is a paradigm based on a myth of legitimacy; its continuation or decline depends upon a political process. All truth has a provisional and political basis. There is no absolute sense in which one theory is more or less true than another.

Therefore, justification for the current study's conceptual framework is not sought in any alleged superiority with regard to revelation of truth. Instead, its value is asserted in its potential for generating insight with regard to facets of human behaviour for which the dominant structural-functionalist paradigm is ill-equipped to probe.

Contemporary Dissent from the Dominant Sociological Paradigm

The classical sociological tradition which underlies theory construction and social research in North America, originated in tumultuous debate characterizing the intellectual world during the nineteenth century (Douglas 1971:vii). Its special blend of theory methods and standards is summarized by Derek Phillips in his introduction to Knowledge from What? (1971).

> While a graduate student at Yale, I learned about many of the central concerns of sociology: culture, social structure, norms, socialization, deviance, values, stratification. But what was considered

> most important and crucial to my training was the acquisition of knowledge concerning sociological theory and methodology, the relationship between the two, and their respective roles in empirical research. Certain 'gods' were held up as examplars of theoretical purity (Parsons, Merton), methodological sophistication (Lazarsfeld, Hyman), and research expertise (Lipset, Coleman). I learned that one's hypotheses emerge from systematic consideration or review of writings of other sociologists, that these hypotheses have some theoretical justification, and that they must be tested empirically. I was also taught that sociological investigators are, and should be, value-free, and that a researcher's theories and findings become cumulative. Finally, I acquired the belief that most of our empirical results bore some rather obvious relation to reality--to what is 'out there'.

Phillips is, in effect, explaining his early commitment to sociology as constituting a theoretical and empirical science. This has been the major theme of the discipline during the mid-twentieth century. It comprises the dominant paradigm governing research in the social sciences since 1945.

Organizational research has also reflected what Severyn Bruyn (1966:49) refers to as an "external theoretical perspective." Within this perspective, individual behaviour is presumed a function of forces generally indiscernable to the actor. Society itself which is conceptualized as an integrated matrix, presumably generates these forces. Conformity, and integration of the individual within the societal fabric, is secured out of adherence to a common value system. This is further reinforced by a strain toward system maintenance which is also instrumental in achieving societal equilibrium.

The determinism which characterizes this dominant frame of reference is simultaneously a justification for, as well as a product of, a particular type of inquiry namely, the scientific method. Application of a methodology borrowed from the natural sciences is appropriate to the traditional preoccupation with cause-and-effect relationships between externally defined variables. Quantitative measurement and prediction of behaviour are standard tasks. The conceptualization and the methodology reinforce each other. They minimize the importance of intentionality as an influence on human conduct. The deterministic conceptualization's methodology militates against discovering the importance of voluntary action.

Not unexpectedly, studies of organizations, have reflected the physicist's and the biologist's concern for rigorous experimental design. Standards of reliability and validity are considered paramount. The social scientist's field of inquiry has served to limit the amount of precision that can be achieved with regard to verification. Moreover, despite great advances in the application of high-speed data processing techniques and the progress that this has facilitated with respect to large-scale social surveys, universal laws have resisted formulation in the social sciences. Disenchantment with the results that scientific method has produced for sociological research has reinforced a general predisposition to question traditional conventions that have governed social inquiry for a quarter of a century.

In Culture Storm: Politics and the Ritual Order (1973:13), Nieburg's sweeping rejection of traditional sociological canons indicates disenchantment that has generated a search by many social researchers for new ways of studying society.

> Old myths of authority begin to dissipate as the decades revolve and the counterculture challenges all things. So-called quantifiers turn out to be no more empirical than anyone else and probably more baroque and metaphysical than many traditional social scientists. Daily events are the arbiters of the legitimacy of current myths. No scientific

> method rises above this process to attain an absolute status; everything is transformed by ritual into magic-wonder fairy tales. Every researcher starts with his own experience and his own self-discovered truths, the values that represent the accumulated grievances of his life and all of his current alibis for himself. Every researcher gains his insights from attempts to build legitimacy on the wreckage of himself. Data and methods are props and incantations 'Professionalism' and the 'scientific method' are the Better Business Bureau driving out the most transparent schlock dealers, lest the audience discover that the unprincipled merchandise is sometimes just as good as the official stuff.

Discounting the rhetorical affect for which Nieburg is obviously striving, he nevertheless broaches significant philosophical and theoretical problems. Louch (1966:233) states somewhat more succinctly similar reservations.

> For the behavioural scientist . . . , the rationale for his activity is the univocal theory of explanation that all explanation consists in bringing a case under a law. This view has an initial plausibility when developed within the domain of the science of mechanics (though even here there are some doubts . . .), but as applied to human performance it is totally irrelevant, producing, to the extent that its form is religiously followed, the sterile research that characterizes much of modern psychology and social science.

A further example of dissatisfaction is Dixon's (1973:104) reaction against efforts in the social sciences to replicate physical science models. These endeavours, he contends, are but one untoward manifestation of allegedly counterproductive approaches to the larger issue of sociological explanation.

> I have argued that, as a matter of fact, attempts to formulate a systematic sociological macro theory have either parodied the methods of physical science or distorted the contingencies of history in the interest of establishing spurious sets of causal or quasi-causal relationships linking doubiously-defined 'societal variables'.

A damning critique that radical sociologists mount against inadequate knowledge generated by traditional research concerns the failure of systems theory to anticipate and explain the civil strife currently being experienced. This unrest erupted during the nineteen sixties within groups that had comprised the subjects for extensive social research in the previous decade. Yet, no warning was sounded and no adequate theoretical explanations have since been forthcoming that attest to the viability of systems explanations for the dissent.

'Radical' Sociology and Alternative Paradigms

Dissatisfaction with the classical sociological tradition increased during the nineteen sixties. At the end of the decade, Hans Peter Dreitzel (1969:viii) delineated a shift in the dominant sociological interest. Whereas previously sociologists revealed an intense interest in Parsonian theory and functionalist stratification, Dreitzel perceived a growing preoccupation with "the study of power structures and political movements, as well as new readiness to utilize the Marxist point of view and to discuss socialist ideas." Although, in his opinion, only a minority of sociologists had switched allegiance, the break with the traditional paradigm was such as to permit him to detect a new 'radical' sociology, clearly at variance with 'establishment' sociology.

The nature and extent of the rift in the social sciences generates considerable debate. Much of the polemic surrounds Alvin Gouldner's claims as stated in The Coming Crisis in Western Sociology (1970). In the face of criticism from contemporaries that he exaggerates the extent of disaffection within the ranks of social scientists, Gouldner (1973:158) lists a compendium of manifestations arising out of the quest for more meaningful sociology. These, he list as:

> . . . the resurgence and renewed vitality in sociology of various models of Marxism and neo-Marxism; the elaborated development of Erving Goffman's unique social dramaturgy; the spread of Harold Garfinkel's ethno-methodology and its growth from programmatic statement to concrete studies such as those by David Sudnow, Harvey Sacks and others; the very important new meta-theoretical work by Alan Blum; Peter Winch's provocative sociological version of Wittgenstein; and the powerful work and growth of interest in the 'newer' generation of the Frankfurt School . . . .

Essentially, the major philosophic streams underlying these innovative approaches to social investigation are phenomenology, existentialism; and psycho-linguistics (Douglas 1971:vii).

In "The Two Sociologies" (1970:207-219), Alan Dawe explains that the 'radical' or alternative paradigms challenge the orthodoxy that the central concern of sociology is social order and hence, the notion that externality and constraint are primary themes governing human behaviour. Questioned is the assumption that:

> . . . the central value system is the ultimate source of the moral authority which sets the social system over its participants in such a way as to impose a common meaning and, therefore, order upon them (Dawe 1970:208).

As central to the interest of the new sociology, the problem of control replaces that of order. Two emergent concepts linked closely with the problem of control are those of central meaning, and the analytic concept of control itself. The former basically involves the social actor who integrates experience into an overall life meaning that then governs definitions and goals appropriate to given situations. The analytic concept of controls adds the dimension of action to meaning. It also involves the notion of interaction or relationship with other actors. In the first place, control is presumed accomplished out of an actor's efforts or actions which impose meaning in a given circumstance. Secondly, at the level of interaction, control is established when one actor imposes a definition upon other actors in a situation. The concept of control places primacy therefore, on social relationships that integrate participants within interaction systems. It supercedes the traditional deterministic conceptualization of human behavior. Replacing this notion is a perception of social reality defined by Silverman (1971:5) as being "socially constructed, socially sustained, and socially changed."

This emphasis upon human intentionality and consciousness are portrayed by a broad array of social scientists. For example, it is manifest in the concepts for the 'generalized other' and socially constructed 'self' proposed in the social psychology of George Herbert Mean (1934) and which have been further developed in Herbert Blumer's Symbolic Interactionism (1969). In a similar vein, The Social Construction of Reality (Berger and Luckmann 1966) pursues phenomenology as previously propounded by Alfred Schutz. Ethnomethodology, with its emphasis upon documentary interpretation of subjects' everyday accounts shares this intellectual heritage. The influence of linguistic philosophy is revealed in Aaron Cicourel's volume, The Social Organization of Juvenile Justice (1968). On the basis of transcripts collected during participant observation research, Cicourel explores the "sense of social structure" on the basis of which, he alleges, the individual affect transformation of "an environment of objects into recognizable and intelligent displays making up everyday social organization" (1968:328).

The potential for enriching the quality of traditional sociological concepts by taking advantage of recent developments in other facets of the social sciences is explored in Cognitive Sociology: Language and Meaning in Social Interaction (Cicourel 1973). Research in cultural anthropology, as well as insight suggested by general inquiry in the linguistics field and developmental psycholinguistics in particular, are utilized by Cicourel. He (1973:42-74) develops, for example, a synthesis therefrom to replace the traditional sociological conceptualization of socialization. The resulting "developmental model" provides a more servicable and authentic accounting of the way in which social structure is intuited. Summarizing, he (1973:72) asserts:

> . . . I suggest that commonly held conceptions in anthropology and sociology about the fundamental role of a common value system require modification for explaining how social order is possible. The idea that concerted action is possible because norms and common value orientations generate consensus has been a long-standing thesis in the literature.

Continuing, Cicourel takes issue with the proposition that concerted action within a community requires prior commitment to an apprehended common value system.

> I am not saying that values do not enter into the picture or that they are unnecessary, but that their role in generating, sustaining, or changing action scenes is always dependent upon the properties or interpretive procedures.
> (Emphasis added)

Reference to "interpretive procedures and their reflexive features" is a recurring theme in Cicourel's new brand of sociology.

The linguistic and the anthropological disciplines to which Cicourel (1973:8) acknowledges an intellectual debt have a distinguished and turbulent history. Developments of landmark significance emerged in the nineteen twenties and the nineteen thirties. Banjamin Whorf and Edward Sapir were then responsible for calling into question long-standing assumptions with respect to the limited role of language in human culture. Whereas previously, language was commonly recognized simply as a vehicle for enunciating ideas, the hypothesis which Whorf formulated supported the notion that man is "a prisoner of his language." To justify this metaphor, Farb (1968:53) cites Whorf's speculation that the structure of a language:

> . . . is itself the shaper of ideas, the program and guide for the individual's mental activity, for his analysis of impressions, for his synthesis of his mental stock in trade . . . . We dissect nature along lines laid down by our native languages.

The Humboldt-Sapir-Whorf hypothesis (which is the label attached to this line of speculation) is not a subject of general agreement (Hoebel 1966). If for no other reason, it must be considered valuable because it stimulated widespread discussion that has registered acute awareness with respect to the importance of language as a basis for understanding behaviour.

One major barrier to the operationalization of concepts suggested for sociology by Cicourel is the social researchers' inadequate preparation in the field of general semantics. The shortcoming is not that substantive theoretical work is unavailable. S. I. Hayakawa (1972) for instance, has won international fame for his contributions to this field. Instead, overreliance on a structural-functional paradigm has diverted sociologists' attention to more apparent constraints upon human behaviour.

This Study's Location within an Alternative Paradigm

Much that has been expressed in the previous sections reflects this study's conceptual departure from systems analysis. Instead, its findings are reported within a conceptual framework that emphasizes parallels between human interaction and drama, as well as interaction and game playing. When alternatives are suggested for any traditional practice, the danger arises that the challenge will be misconstrued. Polarization and factionalism may result. Brittan (1973:2) counsels against creation of false dichotomy between the recently propounded concepts and those traditionally espoused by sociologists.

> . . . the fantastic claims that are made every few years for a new liberating concept of perspective, leads one to the conclusion that sociologists are involved in their own millenarian movement. Such claims have been made for role theory, action theory, cybernetics, systems theory, information theory, games theory, etc., etc.. It is essential to realize that this proliferation of concepts, models and theories never represents points of arrival--they merely indicate the essential open-ended and processual nature of the sociological enterprise. There is no theoretical certainty in sociology.

This study does not propose "fantastic claims." It merely suggests an alternative that may enrich the knowledge base concerning social behaviour in organizations.

A dramaturgic-game model constitutes the conceptual basis for this research project. It therefore comprises part of the millenarian movement to which Brittan alludes. The conceptual approach constitutes a break with tradition in that it focuses upon interaction in particular episodes. The dramaturgic-game metaphor complements rather that supplants other societal models. It does not reject the importance of structural constraints. For example, it resembles but expands upon the notion of dramatic performance inherent in role theory. The explanatory power of bargaining and exchange models in particular facets of human interaction is not supplanted by it. Finally, the dramaturgic-game analogy is limited in the extent to which it can be elevated to provide general accounts of social behaviour (Louch 1966:214). In other words, its proponents have been unable "to translate the mundane to the level of macro processes" (Brittan 1973: 203). Essentially therefore, the major justification for alternatives such as the dramaturgic-game metaphor resides with a capacity to remind "scientistically-inclined sociologists that the facets of consciousness, purpose and choice between 'real' alternatives are central to an analysis of human behavior" (Dixon 1973:126-127).

Interaction as Drama

Explanation of human interaction in terms of the dramaturgic analogy is most closely identifiable with ideas expressed in Erving Goffman's writing. Significant among his earliest work are Presentation of Self in Everyday Life (1959), Encounters (1961), and Behavior in Public Places (1963). In a series of subsequent articles and books Goffman has elaborated and refined the dramaturgic metaphor. Salient in his conceptual orientation, is the notion of theatrical performance. That is interaction is posited as a rendering of a performance by one entity (the actor) with the cooperation of another entity (the audience). The process is presumed to involve continuous negotiation between the two.

The analogy does not however, imply that interaction should be equated simply with one type of performance. Impression management may be conceptualized as operating at several levels of awareness. In one instance for example, it may be accomplished subliminally. This occurs particularly where the 'normal' activities characterizing everyday life are involved. Secondly, in the case of non-recurrent performance which Brittan (1973:117) labels "anticipatory socialization", the idea of rehearsal for performance at a given time is imprecise. He explains further.

> At a more conscious level, socialization implies the learning of appropriate performances which can be stored up for future realization (anticipatory socialization). Furthermore, roletaking is essentially a dramatic rehearsal--roles are rehearsed in anticipation of the evaluations and appraisals implicit in ongoing lines of activity.

Interaction forming a third category does, however, closely resemble theatrical presentation. The interactant is conceptualized as an actor employing masks, costumes, mannerisms and stage props to construct a performance which the audience will appreciate and find convincing. The patrons are confronted with a setting which resembles a stage or 'front' region. Access to 'back' regions where costumes are removed and masks laid aside is denied them at the actor's discretion. Total disclosure does not accompany admission to the backstage area. The performers may use admission to the backstage as a blind. In this way they deceive the audience with respect to existence of other inaccessible backstage regions.

The dramaturgic metaphor encompasses a broader and more diverse range of interaction than role theory by allowing for extemporaneous action. It also extends to relationships between groups as well as individuals comprising society. Brittan (1973:119) alludes specifically to its conceptualization of the terms upon which actors perceive their social environment.

> The proverbial common man sees the world in highly dramatic terms. The metaphors he employs, the evaluations he makes of others, the assumptions he makes, are dramatic. Men are considered to be good or evil, blameworthy or blameless. The world is seen as providing the stage for the monumental battle of political forces which are described in dramatic terms.

Therefore, the dramatic model is more comprehensive than its predecessors to the extent that it incorporates more than mere interpersonal relations. It posits dramatic performance as providing the source of meaning for wide-ranging human discourse situations.

Interaction as a Game

Reference to many facets of interaction as constituting 'game playing' has become commonplace. Moreover, a cynical connotation has been acquired partly as a consequence of the term's popularization in such volumes as Games People Play (Berne 1964). The game metaphor as employed by Scott (1968), Lyman and Scott (1970), Walsh (1972), Brittan (1973), and Nieburg (1973), is free of this pejorative implication.

The game analogy is not a device developed exclusively within that branch of the social sciences with which writers such as Lyman, Scott and Walsh are identified. Mathematical gaming models and theoretical approaches conceptualizing the individual as "a chess player writ large" (Louch 1966: 209-210) have been used for at least two decades. Their major value has been demonstrated in the area of political and strategic simulation. Thomas C. Schelling's The Strategy of Conflict (1963) and Anatol Rapoport's Fights, Games and Debates (1960) are representative of a game theory tradition, the context of which is somewhat more constrained than that assumed with dramaturgic-game models. Game theory usually focuses upon decision making involving two parties. Absolute conflict of interest and zero-sum outcomes are assumed. In addition, the actors are presumed to exercise perfect rationality to possess mutual knowledge of possible outcomes, and to be in mutual agreement on rank ordering of preferences (Lyman and Scott 1970: 29).

Limitations Inherent to the Dramatic and the Game Analogies

A vital distinction observed in formulating the dramaturgic-game model for this study concerns interactions on the one hand, and the metaphor employed to meaningfully explain the interaction on the other. In other words, interaction is conceptualized as being 'like' a game. The model does not suggest that interaction 'is' a game (Louch 1966;227). The significance of this distinction is elaborated by Brittan (1973:130-131).

> In considering social interaction at the direct interpersonal level we can also envisage the rules that enter into interaction as being 'game elements', provided we realize that games, like drama, are based on social behaviour and not the other way round. Games, as played consciously, are merely a symbolic formalization of basic social processes. Similarly, drama is a statement of a basic social process. (Brittan's emphasis).

The dramaturgic-game metaphor's primary value therefore, is in the illumination it promises with respect to hither-to obscured and neglected facets of everyday interaction. Although much of its potential resides with its explanation of interaction in terms of conflict, it does not claim that all interaction can be explained in these terms. Furthermore, while small group process such as that explored by Thibault and Kelley (1959) is germane to the model's development; its application extends to social processes involving interaction between groups. Finally, its explanations cannot rival or usurp those offered in specific domains by bargaining theory or exchange models.

Conceptualized as a symbolic formalization, the dramaturgic-game analogy suffers from certain limitations with respect to melioration and theoretical generalizability. Commenting on Harold Garfinkel's Studies in Ethnomethodology (1967), Filmer (1972:204) notes the author's express denial that ethnomethodology provides correctives, supplements to standard procedures, or remedies for practical action. A similar caveat is proclaimed by Rom Harre in an introduction to Lyman and Scott's (1970) game model refinement.

> Scientists need not produce laws as a result of their studies. They might, in some fields, be the entrepreneurs of understanding. The upshot of an investigation might be a set of concepts with which episodes can be understood. The use of concepts may provide no general knowledge, and no expectation of future behavior. But it may make each episode intelligible in itself.

The implications of this orientation for theory development are articulated by Louch (1966:227) who observes that:

> . . . the value of game analysis is in its metaphorical use, which implies quite specific ad hoc applications and prohibits the adding up of successful applications into a general theory of behaviour.

Stated simply, this means that the dramaturgic-game model shares an intellectual heritage with paradigms running counter to the dominant tradition that strives for achievement of universal theory in the social sciences. It does not constitute a general theory of action. Instead, it provides an "heuristic model of man" (Lyman and Scott 1970:5-6) for analysis of the social world.

In summary, this study's conceptual framework assumes greater clarity when it is placed within a context that illustrates its basic departure from conventions that have traditionally governed social science investigation. In this first of three sections that coincide with Kuhn's (1962) basic components of a scientific paradigm, basic theoretic developments in the social sciences have been reviewed. Contemporary dissatisfactions with systems and structural-functional explanations of society are identified as the point of departure for currently-developing radical sociology. The latter's fundamental difference is its emphasis upon human intentionality as a basic component underlying behaviour. It constitutes a reaction to mechanistic and deterministic interpretations that are characteristic of systems and structural-functionalist conceptualizations. The alternative paradigm adopted for this study eschews a mechanistic model of man in favour of one which allows for creative behaviour construction. This model relies on comparison of everyday human interaction with behaviour typically identified as dramatic portrayal and/or game playing.

The study's basic theoretical assumptions shape its methodology and the standards of verification. These two components of every scientific paradigm are outlined for the relevance to this study in the remainder of the chapter. As was the case in the first segment, methodology and verification standards are more readily understandable in this study's setting, when compared and contrasted with the traditional paradigm's research conventions.

II METHODOLOGY

Methodology comprises the second element in Thomas Kuhn's (1962) description of a scientific paradigm. Its interdependence with theory and standards is emphasized also by Cicourel (1968:vii) who states his fundamental preoccupation in the following terms.

> I am concerned with the development of methods (which I view as basic to theory construction) for particular theoretical issues while making the researcher's and the actor's rules of procedure problematic elements in all research. How do both the researcher and the actor come to know, understand, and predict or categorize an environment of objects and consequently arrive at findings or socially distributed knowledge?

> The researcher's activities must be as much an object of study as the actor's ways of 'knowing' or 'explaining' environment.

In Phillips' (1973:78) opinion, greater self-consciousness employed by methodologists constitutes one important means for breaking the chain of circularity that results in a situation where method reinforces theory without testing it. He explains his point thus:

> . . . what we know about social behavior (and indeed most social phenomena) is dependent on our methods for studying it, while our methods for studying it depend on what we know about social behavior. So in order to know more about social behavior and interaction, we need better methods, and to obtain better methods we need to know more about behavior and interaction.

The use of participant observation in the currently reported study does not imply that this methodology represents a panacea for sociological inquiry. Nevertheless, social scientists, like Cicourel (1968), Silverman (1972c), and Phillips (1973) who state concern for its methodological complexities specifically recognize participant observation as constituting a valuable research vehicle.

Silverman agrees with reservations expressed by Phillipson (1972b: 139) over discrepancies between the participant observer's basic research assumptions and "relevancies" associated with a "constitutive phenomenology of the natural attitude." He (1972c:190) concedes however, that the methodology is superior in the way that it facilitates researcher subjective cognition:

> Participant observation has a long and distinguished history in social science. At one and the same time, it is probably the most rewarding and dangerous research technique. In unsophisticated hands, its results reflect ethnocentrism which simply confirms the perceptions of the observer . . . . Its great advantage is that it can give the good researcher a 'feel' of the situation and help generate hypotheses which can be revised as knowledge increases.

To guard against ethnocentrism, the participant observer deliberately cultivates a self-conscious approach to the research task and to the information which is revealed by participant observation. The reflective process includes scrutiny of basic assumptions, similar to that conducted in the previous theory section. A review of fundamental philosophical questions is not sufficient. The participant observation methodology itself, warrants examination. Questions pertaining to its strengths and limitations are addressed in the remainder of this methodology section and also, in the subsequent discussion that focuses on verification standards.

The Participant Observation Method

In comparison with details on experimental and survey research reported in scholarly journals, the participant observation method receives relatively sparse treatment (Phillips 1971:3; Psathas 1973:18). Nevertheless, the would-be participant observer can glean valuable information from several excellent books devoted exclusively to the methodology and the problems it confronts. Most notable among these are volumes by Junker (1960), Bruyn (1966), Filstead (1970) and Schatzman _et al_ (1973).

In essence, the participant observer's task is to collect data by experiencing at first hand those activities which occur daily within the group or organization comprising the research study's focus. Bruyn (1966:12) explains the execution of this task.

> By taking the role of his subjects he (the participant observer) creates in his own imagination and experience the thoughts and feelings which are in the minds of those he studies. It is through a process of symbolic interpretation of the 'experienced culture' that the observer works with his data and discovers meanings in them.

The subject's nature, access feasibility, research resources, and the study's projected time span, all conspire to impose certain limitations upon the participant observer's procedures and findings. The degree to which the investigator is free to participate in the life of those under study varies situationally. This variation may be illustrated as comprising a continuum. One pole represents the situation where the researcher is totally immersed and indistinguishable from the study's subjects themselves. At the other conceptual extreme, the researcher may be isolated strictly as an observer. "Participant-as-observer" and "observer-as-participant" constitute intermediate research role types. For the most part, during the course of this study the latter role was most easily attainable. In some instances, the researcher followed the strict observer role.

The literature contains no standardized checklist of participant observation procedure. Much of the valuable writing on this research technique consists of accounts, compiled retrospectively, relating to field research projects. In other words, it amounts to an effort by field researchers to clarify for themselves, just exactly what method they actually employed. In Men Who Manage (1959) for instance, Melcille Dalton recounts his experience with surreptitious observation in business firms. In similar vein, is Donald Roy's (1970) elaboration of the development of an "Ernie Pyle" type technique during the course of witnessing labour-management disputes. Perhaps the most interesting and practical field research guide emerges from Rosalie Wax's (1960 and 1970) accounts of participant observation with Japanese-American internees and North American Indians. Of particular value is her demonstrated capacity to overcome barriers to inquiry inherent in a researcher's alien appearance and presence.

Although methodology and standards of verifications are difficult to separate where research strategies are generally subject to examination, the participant observation method poses special problems. During the course of field study the participant observer engages in ongoing reflection with regard to data. Each reflective exercise provides a plateau from which subsequent research may be required to move in previously unanticipated directions. In other words, verification is not absolutely determined in advance of research. It is an ongoing procedure inextricably linked to events at the research site. Moreover, not only may it shape interim adjustments in the investigative thrust, but verification procedures may vary according to situations arising during the research venture. Consequently, discussion of the nature of participant observation inquiry does not cease when emphasis shifts in the following section to verification standards.

III STANDARDS OF VERIFICATION

Tenets of Verification in an Evolving Paradigm

For research in which theoretical assumptions and methodology recognize and focus upon the interpretive aspects of interaction, new descriptive standards must be formulated. The logic of deductive explanation traditionally applied where investigation is oriented to literal description does not suffice. Thomas Wilson's conclusions in "Conceptions of Interaction and Forms of Sociological Interpretation," (1970:710) reveal the underlying rationale for new approaches to validity and reliability.

> Sociological explanations of patterns of interaction
> are inherently interpretive rather than deductive,
> and thus they are subject to canons of objectivity
> and competence quite different, though no less

> demanding, from those employed in the sciences based on literal description. Further, the apparatus of sociological theory is not to be viewed as a primitive effort toward deductive explanation, but rather a framework of conceptions that guides the investigator in formulating an interpretive scheme useful for analysis of his problem.

Within this frame of reference, the researcher can no longer assume the existence of a shared system of symbols created out of cognitive consensus within a given culture. Consequently, the interpretive process itself becomes a focus of inquiry.

Phillipson (1972b:139) reveals the participant observers' unique propensity for engaging in a process resembling that described by Wilson. However, he explains a difference in intent.

> It is interesting that almost the only technique in which the observer feels that it is necessary to give some kind of explanation for his assumptions occurs in participant observation. This necessity to justify his decisions and data selections, which the participant observer alone seems to accept, would appear to stem, to a great extent, from the suspicion with which this technique is regarded by the proponents of conventional sociological research techniques; it is the technique which appears least amenable to the ostensibly 'precise' rule governed procedures of conventional survey methods . . . .

Evidence of painstaking attempts to align participant observation with the scientific empirical mode of verification is contained in Issues in Participant Observation (McCall and Simmons 1969). Severyn Bruyn (1966: 198-254) suggests participant observation as a viable alternative to the scientific enquiry method. He demonstrates a propensity for allegiance to verification prescriptions that correspond to those of the scientific empiricist. For this he arouses criticism by radical sociologists.

Phillipson (1972a:115) for his part, rejects this type of formalism on the grounds that it obscures the observer's and the subjects' crucial tacit dependence upon commonsense reasoning. He reacts against the notion of subjectivity and objectivity as comprising a dichotomy in the social sciences. He asserts that only when this particular structure is disregarded as inconsequential can participant observation (and allied research) be developed as anything other than appendages to traditional empirical inquiry.

In pursuing this criticism of Bruyn's "structured" approach to verification, Phillipson overlooks the "stylistic" alternative that is elaborated in the same volume (1966:244). This type of inquiry, Bruyn justifies on grounds that it liberates the researcher from counterproductive constraint imposed by adherence to "scientific factors."

> These scientific factors will exclude other meaning which could be more important to people in the context of a culture. The researcher then, who is interested in letting a culture 'speak' to him more directly as it exists with its own 'categories' and 'values' can shape his study with this in mind. He can chart his research with more emphasis on the discovery of meanings in open encounter with his subjects . . . .

Rom Harre's introduction to A Sociology of the Absurd (1970:ix) suggests this same brand of inquiry wherein the researcher adopts the poet's, the novelist's, and the playwright's skills that "demand the power to live with some awareness of the situations, the negotiations, linguistic interactions, (and) changing capabilities and powers through which one lives." That traditional verification tenets comprise a barrier to revelation of crucial information and must therefore allow parity to new orthodoxies, is argued also be Derek Phillips (1973:159-163). He suggests that the researcher be permitted a "playful stance" in relation to data. This will have the effect, he contends, of liberating imagination, intuition, and creativity, thus facilitating access to hitherto obscure areas of knowledge.

Unresolved Questions Pertaining to Bias-Free Research

Standards of verification are governed by the particular paradigm within which a given body of research is formulated. During periods of transition in which new and alternative paradigms are proposed, special difficulties arise. They rarely come into existence in a complete and fully articulated form. Social scientists and philosophers who, like Mills (1959) and Heidegger (1962), pioneer these major departures anticipate long periods during which the capacity to propound new forms of verification remains limited (Bruyn 1966:266-267). Difficulties currently encountered in radical sociology are indicated by Psathas (1973:17-18).

> The phenomenological approach does not restrict the observer to a narrow set of methods or perspectives. There is no formula or recipe for procedures which is to be applied ready-made to the problem being studied. . . . One cannot pick up a book of rules on how to do a phenomenological analysis and jump in. The adoption of a new paradigm for research involves the researcher in a major reformulation of his thinking.

Central to this 'reformulation' is the matter of objectivity. Objectivity as explained through appeals and reference to technical skill characteristic of scientific method. Objectivity, in this sense, is inappropriate when employed in the context of this study's alternative paradigm.

One major source of contention revolves around definition and identification of bias. According to Phillips (1973:145) there exists only one correct report, namely that yielded by nature. The sociologist, acting in the capacity of messenger, transmits this report to the reader. Phenomenologists reject bias as something originating with 'conventional wisdom' pertinent only to one particular scientific paradigm. It is absent from their own. They reject the Kantian tradition within which "objectivity" is conceptualized in terms of a capacity to apply technical skill in the task of "capturing or 'bottling' the phenomena invoked as observational sources of data" (Cicourel 1964:15). Their conventions reflect the Cartesian tradition that requires examination of researcher preconceptions and assumptions. Within this framework the natural world provides the ultimate verification test. Within this study's paradigm, debate on the existence or non-existence of bias is less urgent than mutual understanding of the paradigm itself. (Phillips 1973:142).

Nieburg (1973:249) argues that the points phenomenologists raise with regard to verification that expose flaws, hitherto disregarded by positivism in the social sciences. He argues, moreover, that events in the past decade prohibit any further tendency to disregard the importance of "common sense glosses" where all forms of research are concerned.

> In the wake of the cultural revolution, we must assert the primacy of judgment and the human scale in a world where uncertainty and tentative knowledge must live by provisional truths. The claims made in the name of scientific rationalism no longer pass unchallenged.. The softness of the social sciences becomes a scientific value as an end and a means of truth. Soft truth may be the best kind, and soft, decisions, flexible and open, able to be revised and extended, like clay pressed by many fingers, are very welcome. More and more it becomes clear there are no pure science problems, only human problems and political choices. The technological imperative is dead; the God of Newtonian order died with the myths of scientific certainty.

Specifically in the area of participant observation research, the major verification task requires revelation of the investigator's "common sense glosses," or that which Wilson (1970:706) describes as "the context and grounds for his interpretation."

Cicourel (1964) suggests that a study's "natural history" drafted by the researcher provides one avenue for revealing contextual insight. This reconstruction does not necessarily comprise a daily diary of events. It should provide an accounting of features that the researcher considers salient to the study's analysis. Psathas (1973:12) suggests at least three points to guide this accounting. In the first instance, findings should be demonstrably congruent with member experience. Secondly, the experience should be reported in detail. In other words, adequacy should be assessed in terms of whether a situated account would allow a previously uninitiated reader to comprehend "whatever it is one has to know or believe in order to be able to operate in a manner acceptable to its members and to do so in any role that they accept for any one of themselves" (Goodenough 1964:36).[1] Finally, Psathas expects the participant observer to impart information that accords to the reader, not only the 'power to recognize', but also, the 'power to play'.

SUMMARY

This study is formulated within a scientific paradigm that differs from the dominant sociological paradigm which reflects the influence of Parsonian/systems theory and structural functional models of society. The latter have traditionally comprised the focus for a substantial body of research in educational administration. This study's alternative paradigm is currently developing and, in certain respects is incomplete. For this reason it is more easily explained by comparison with the dominant paradigm. This scrutiny requires that attention be directed toward discussion of three basic components. These components are theory, methods, and standards of verification. They are interrelated and reciprocal.

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[1] Goodenough's statement enjoys considerable widespread acceptance. Both Scott (1968:6) and Silverman (1972a:10) give it direct recognition, while Walsh (1972:33) paraphrases it in stating that "An adequate sociological explanation would be one which provided the required knowledge to pass as a member of the given setting under examination."

The basic theoretical differences between the traditionally dominant systems-oriented paradigm and the alternative radical paradigms are summarized at the end of this chapter's first section. The former relies on a notion that the world is knowable in a real form and that it is characterized by laws governing individual behaviour. Proponents of alternative sociological paradigms assert that individuals place varying constructions on social existence and that people live by their unique interpretations of social reality.

The latter set of assumptions create special research problems for this study. Positivism which is appropriate within a mechanistic model of human behaviour is inappropriate for this study's objectives. Participant observation is more suitable because it allows inquiry into the research subjects' social constructions of reality. It permits the researcher to witness individuals and groups as they translate these constructions into action. This access affords opportunity to develop the dramatic and game metaphors formulated as the study's conceptual bases.

The choice of the participant observer technique for this study poses special problems with regard to verification standards. The paradigm is incompatible with the scientific method's traditionally accepted standards regarding validity and reliability. A new set of "common sense glosses" are being developed as the parameters of the alternative sociology are being more clearly explicated. The capacity for self-consciousness and reflective thought are two elements which participant observation must incorporate in order to minimize ethnocentrism. For the most part, this study's verification standards are incorporated with periodic testing of information as inquiry proceeds. To the extent that observations are tested periodically against facts extant in particular investigation settings, and are found to be authentic, verification adequacy is assumed.

CHAPTER III

PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION METHODOLOGY

The general participant observation subject area has been discussed in the methodology section and the section in the previous chapter concerning conceptual bases for verification standards. This chapter examines participant observation as it was employed for data collection in this study of the education collective bargaining setting. Two issues are singled out for detailed examination. The first concerns elaboration of the researcher's background expectancies. The second involves outlining the actual research strategies followed in the study. Accordingly, the chapter is divided into two segments, namely, the pre-observation phase and the observation phase.

I THE PRE-PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION PHASE

The researcher's background expectancies are articulated in a participant observation study for at least two audiences. The first audience is the researcher himself. The second audience is the reader. For the researcher, the stating of background expectancies provides an initial step in the process of developing self-consciousness when approaching the study's data. The same set of expectancies is supplied so that the reader may be advantageously placed to evaluate the authenticity of the researcher's interpretations.

Background expectations are rendered in the following pages under two subheadings. The literature which the researcher encountered during undergraduate and graduate study in the general industrial relations area is briefly summarized under the first subheading. Included under the second subheading is a listing of the major volumes that directly address problems associated with school board and teacher organizations in Canada.

General Overview of Theory Development in Industrial Relations

Existence of an extensive industrial relations literature notwithstanding, no general theory of industrial relations is currently in evidence. The contemporary 'state of the art' is summarized by Hameed (1973:14-15) who alludes to partial formulation at three conceptual levels.

> (a) At the most fundamental level, there are theories of the labour movement by John R. Commons, Selig Perlman, Frank Tannenbaum and others who attempt to explain the phenomenon of worker *participation* in the unions.
>
> (b) At the intermediate level, there are theories of collective bargaining by Neil Chamberlain, Joseph Shister, Reed Tripp and others who attempt to explain the *conversion* of inputs into wage settlement, web of rules and decisions on matters of industrial jurisprudence.
>
> (c) At the highest level of conceptualization, there are theories of industrial relations by John T. Dunlop, Gerald G. Somers, Jack Barbash, Kerr and others who have produced comprehensive frames of analysis for the understanding of labour, management and government interaction and the *output* of the industrial relations system. (Hameed's emphasis).

Furthermore, not only do general industrial relations models lack comprehensive formulation, but the ramifications of relatively recent widespread use of collective bargaining in the public sector have yet to be clarified in the industrial relations literature (Williams 1972:18-19). Woods (1973) has produced an authoritative volume that outlines the basic parameters of public policy with respect to labour relations in Canada. This work is supplemented by the many studies that accompanied the final report of the federal Task Force on Labor Relations (1969) of which Woods was chairman.

The list of titles which could be inserted in a bibliography of collective bargaining publications is substantial. Of special merit however, is Walton and McKersie's, A Behavioral Theory of Labor Negotiations (1965). The authors have developed a framework appropriate for all forms of social interaction. It is grounded in observation of actual collective bargaining situations. A major conceptual contribution which Walton and McKersie have made to the industrial relations literature is their identification of four distinct types of bargaining. The first is distributive or zero-sum bargaining which is commonly recognized in mathematical game theory. They also identify integrative bargaining and attitudinal structuring as discrete bargaining forms. Finally, Walton and McKersie accentuate the bargaining situation that transpires between the bargaining table spokesman and the committee that he represents. The latter form, intra-organizational bargaining, is of paramount importance in this study.

Government, School Board, and Teacher Relations in Canada

Studies by Hardy (1939) Watson (1960) and McDowell (1965) outline a pattern of development of teacher organizations in Ontario, Nova Scotia, and Saskatchewan respectively which is reflected also in Alberta and other Canadian provinces. That is to say, one or more teachers' associations in each Canadian province have exercised considerable influence upon provincial government educational decisions. In Alberta particularly, the existence of a single teachers' association boasting compulsory province-wide membership of teachers and school principals (Kratzmann 1963), is rivalled by a relatively strong, centralized trustees' organization (Roberts 1966). Nationally also, Canadian teachers and school boards have formed associations (Nason 1964). An analysis of this propensity to form province-wide teacher associations is formulated by Manzer (1969). He uses historical data to test the viability of economic, as distinct from sociological, conceptualizations for explaining this phenomenon. Both theoretical approaches are, in Manzer's estimation, justifiable in terms of available evidence.

The implications for educational decision making of these provincial education political interest groups is a popular theme in the literature. For instance J. M. Paton's Quance Lecture (1962) outlines the constraints which increasingly sophisticated provincial teacher associations set for provincial governments' and school boards' perceived prerogatives in decision making. Strong teachers' associations enjoying the right to bargain collectively initially were expected to win significantly higher salaries for their respective memberships. J. Douglas Muir (1968) conducted a survey of teacher salaries in all Canadian provinces. His study provides extensive documentation on different approaches to salary determination. However, his study failed to reveal clear relationships between collective bargaining and higher teacher salary levels. In 1973 Muir's attention focused upon the trend toward regional-level bargaining in western Canadian provinces. He predicted an increase in conflict between school boards and teachers as a result of this trend.

Relationships between the provincial government, school boards, and teachers in Alberta have been the subject of intensive research. Two major themes are apparent. Firstly, the development of both the Alberta Teachers' Association[1] and the Alberta School Trustees' Association[2] as political interest groups has commanded considerable attention from scholars. In addition to research by Kratzmann and Roberts cited previously, thirty years of negotiation between these two associations and the provincial government are documented by Bailey (1956). He records the pressure which the ATA has effectively mounted with the government in achieving its objectives, but he also recognizes that government acquiescence is not an inevitability. Specific cases are documented by Odynak (1963), Selinger (1967), and Angus (1968), when elaborating the pluralistic system of educational governance in Alberta. Stringham (1974) outlines consultation processes that preceded enactment of The School Act, 1971.

In each of these instances the researchers identified a pattern of action and reaction typifying the ATA's and the ASTA's respective approaches to specific issues. Their conclusions usually cast the provincial government in a brokerage role. While attempting to ameliorate adverse effects of conflict between the ATA and the ASTA, it reaches decisions which, in Selinger's (1967:97) estimation, "will attract the support of voters or, at least, not alienate them." Kratzmann (1963:243) reviews four decades of conflict arising between the teachers' and the trustees' associations in the following terms.

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[1] Designated subsequently as ATA

[2] Designated subsequently as ASTA

> All too often for the A.T.A. however, the third party to organizational disputes was the Minister of Education. Any gains in tenure, salaries and pensions could only come through legislative action. And so on many occasions the pattern of action was as follows, A.T.A. proposed, A.S.T.A. opposed, and the Minister acting as political arbiter, disposed.

After the passage of yet another decade, Stringham's (1974:168) comments regarding the Department of Education's committee work on draft School Act legislation suggests continuation of the traditional interaction pattern.

> With respect to powers of school boards and conditions under which teachers' contracts would exist, goals of the Alberta School Trustees' Association and the Alberta Teachers' Association were known and were, on some issues diametrically opposed to each other. This led to a goal on the part of the Department of Education representatives to find some mid-ground or least bad compromise position that would generate the least amount of hostility upon enactment.

Swan (1961) and Brown (1963) have also traced the historical conflict between Alberta school boards and teachers over tenure. They, more readily than Stringham, concede the propensity of the provincial government to pursue a course of action independent of the ASTA's and the ATA's wishes.

The second focal point of empirical inquiry that involves the two associations concerns collective bargaining specifically. The Alberta collective bargaining model is explained as an appropriate source of research interest for several reasons. Firstly, unlike most Canadian teacher associations the ATA enjoys private sector collective bargaining privileges.

In other provinces teacher salary determination proceedings are incorporated within special legislation. Secondly, only teachers in the province of Saskatchewan have enjoyed collective bargaining rights for a time that rivals the ATA's thirty five years of experience with this decision making mode. Thirdly, Muir (1968) points out that Alberta teachers are relatively unique in that ministerial jurisdiction over their salary determination rights is substantially exercised outside the education portfolio. Fourthly, Kratzman (1963) and Odynak (1963) emphasize the compulsory membership right which the ATA has been accorded by the provincial government. It places teachers in a special bargaining category among unions who negotiate under The Alberta Labour Act. The ATA has a statutory safeguard for its "closed shop" status. Trade unions must rely on their bargaining power to negotiate this status. Such a status in the United States would be regarded as unlawful according to The Taft-Hartley Labor-Management Act.

Teacher collective bargaining outcomes in the nineteen sixties are the subject of studies by Johnson (1971) and Harrison (1971). The salience of distributive or zero-sum bargaining is reiterated by Johnson who forecasts no slackening of antipathy between the ASTA and the ATA during the nineteen seventies. Harrison also observes deterioration in the quality of the bargaining relationships between school boards and the ATA. In support of his contention he cites evidence that negotiations are becoming increasingly protracted and substantially more dependent on conciliation intervention.

In summary therefore, before commencing field research, the participant observer in this study accumulated background expectancies germane to school board collective bargaining. These were influenced by exposure to at least two broad literature categories. The first category had been reviewed during graduate and post graduate study in the industrial relations field generally. This particular discipline's literature is extensive. However, no general industrial relations theory has been formulated. For this study's purpose, Walton and McKersie's social negotiations theory which is grounded in empirical data provided insightful conceptualization of bargaining. The second literature category yielded description and analysis of teachers' and trustees' provincial organizations in Canada. The Alberta situation was portrayed as essentially one in which the ASTA and the ATA have been locked in conflict, while the provincial government has sought amicable resolution for their differences. Collective bargaining between Alberta school boards and teachers was depicted in the same light.

One other element which at the study's outset was manifest in the researcher's background expectancies warrants recognition before research strategies are considered. It is associated with conceptual questions addressed in the previous chapter. That is to say, the researcher's original approach to the study reflected assumptions derived from a general sociological perspective submerged in the literature reviewed in this segment of chapter three. Its orientation is basically structural functional. Unlike the sociological perspective that the researcher was forced to adopt as a consequence of experience in the field (and which is labelled 'radical sociology' in chapter 2), the industrial relations literature and the politics of education literature had, therefore induced the researcher to initially perceive the study from a systems perspective. David Easton's (1965) political process model and Alton Craig's (1967) input-output schematic representation of education collective bargaining governed the participant observer's earliest efforts to analyze data. Subsequently, as these efforts failed to do justice to the quality of evidence that was accumulating in field notes, these essentially structural functional models were discarded. Readings in symbolic interactionism (Blumer 1969) allowed the researcher to accomplish a transition to the dramatic and game models explained in chapter two and chapter nine.

In the next section the natural history of the study is completed with an accounting of actual research procedures. It is presented as comprising a basic participant observation component supplemented by several other inquiry modes. The latter are designed to compensate for shortcomings in participant observation's capacity to embrace events occurring over a wide geographic area at irregular and unpredictable intervals.

II THE PARTICIPANT OBSERVATION PHASE

The major obstacle that participant observation faces in the education collective bargaining setting is trust. Because the negotiating parties are suspicious of each other's actions and motives, the researcher must overcome difficulties in allaying their fears that his investigation will compromise their respective bargaining positions. In the several pages which follow, strategies are explained which were calculated to circumvent the adverse effects arising from the subjects' mistrust of the participant observer.

Constraints imposed by limited time and resources available for the study's execution also exerted a considerable influence upon participant observation strategy in this study. In the first place the collective bargaining enterprise as a whole, involving 147 school boards and approximately

22,000 teachers in Alberta, is so large as to prohibit investigation of the large number of potentially fruitful research sites. Secondly, the nature of collective bargaining limits the value of relatively short-term studies. Frequently, negotiations last for many months. Action is sporadic and unpredictable. The participant observer must therefore be prepared to endure periods of inactivity while awaiting the opportunity to witness crucial developments. Meanwhile, this gamble sacrifices time and resources that might otherwise be invested in a more wide-ranging survey.

In this study several supplementary strategies are combined with that which comprises the core of the study. The latter concerns the period devoted to participant observation with the ASTA's Economic Services department between November, 1973 and April, 1974. The former include perusal of printed matter, attendance at school trustee functions, observation at a completed set of negotiations between a SAA and the ATA, as well as conversations with 'knowledgeable others'.

Participant Observation at the ASTA's Head Office

Investigation focused generally on the daily activities of staff officers employed in the ASTA Economic Services Department. For the most part, these officers were engaged in rendering assistance to rural school jurisdictions engaged in collective bargaining. This was not their sole preoccupation, however. Communication with all member school boards, development of ASTA policy with regard to educational finance, and political interest group activity, were but a few of the tasks requiring their time and attention. Actual involvement in the staff officers' work was not always feasible for the researcher. Nevertheless, daily observation from an adjacent vantage point within the ASTA office permitted witnessing of a broad range of conversations and activities central to the Association's operations.[3] Data collection was also facilitated by researcher access to staff meetings, departmental meetings and other *ad hoc* deliberations on emergent issues.

2. Perusal of Printed Matter

In the broad range of memoranda routinely circulated to staff officers and the participant observer, press clippings from many centres in Alberta served to apprise the researcher of the extent and nature of collective bargaining in many local school jurisdictions. Conciliation board submissions from previous years, and the many briefs and submissions that the Association has presented to the Minister and other boards of inquiry also contained valuable material for the study's purposes. Staff position papers provided an outline of the development that Economic Services has undergone in the eight years following its creation. Other information was gleaned from the back issues and current issues of the Association's magazine and its newssheet.

Specifically in the area of collective bargaining, the Economic Services' collective bargaining manual that is circulated annually to school boards constituted a valuable source document. More than a mere compilation of statistical data and trends, this manual suggests a rationale for each recommended bargaining posture. Not unlike its annual counterpart, the Economic Services Bulletin is circulated to school jurisdictions on a monthly basis. It contains editorial material and current statistics. Minutes of meetings, memos, agendas and position papers were collected on an ad hoc basis.

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[3] Because the total office space was landscaped, the researcher's capacity to observe the entire operation was considerably enhanced.

3. Seminars, Councils and Conventions

The ASTA sponsors orientation and administration seminars in addition to its annual Labour Relations Seminar. Annually zone briefings are held for trustees on collective bargaining matters. Regular zone contracts are also scheduled. Attendance at these functions was valuable not only for the substantial quantity of formal material they yielded, but also for the opportunity provided the observer to meet individuals knowledgeable in school board negotiations who might otherwise have remained anonymous or inaccessible. The 1973 and the 1974 ASTA Annual Conventions, scheduled in Calgary and Edmonton respectively, served this dual purpose. Convention attendance also gave the researcher insight on views held by many other school trustees and administrators. Of comparable importance was the April 21-24 ASTA Finance Conference held at Banff in 1974. The 1973 and the 1974 ASTA Labour Relations Seminars provided similar opportunities for sampling informally trustee opinion on collective bargaining matters. During October of 1973, the observer was able to witness local reaction to the ASTA collective bargaining manual by attending two zone briefings delivered by the staff officers responsible for its compilation.

The Metro boards,[4] although not so heavily committed to negotiating 1974 contracts as were their counterparts, were confronted with the relatively novel phenomenon of requests to "reopen" current two-year contracts. Insight on their reaction to the situation was derived in the course of observation at a joint meeting involving administrators and trustees from these four jurisdictions. Something of their collective bargaining orientation was also gleaned from formal and informal remarks of their representatives on the ASTA Economic Council which meets regularly.

These council meetings constituted a venue for witnessing the reaction of rural trustees to emerging collective bargaining events. Many Economic Council representatives for example, also were engaged during the study in collective bargaining assignments on behalf of school boards. Consequently, the Economic Council meeting dates were also used by ASTA officials as convenient times to call for joint consultation on the progress of negotiations by SAAs. These meetings involving SAA chairmen were most illuminating for the researcher. They demonstrated the fundamental difficulties which the ASTA faces when trying to promote unified collective bargaining action by school boards. Simultaneously, the views expressed at these meetings dramatized the need for this type of cooperation between school boards.

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[4] See Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations. This term is a word commonly applied with reference to the Edmonton and Calgary school boards as a collectivity. It has no legal significance in the Alberta setting.

4. Observation Pertaining to a Complete Set of Negotiations

Over a period spanning approximately four months, the researcher witnessed the process whereby member boards of a school authorities association completed a collective agreement with teacher employees. Investigation involved observation at many different sites and was supplemented by interviews and data derived from questionnaires.

At the outset, delay caused by the late admission to the SAA of an additional member, permitted the researcher valuable time in which to gain familiarity with the general collective bargaining milieu. This respite was needed to secure from the ATA permission to attend collective bargaining sessions. The latter process, in itself, yielded valuable insight on the nature of the mistrust existing between teachers and school boards. Other activity at the preliminary stage involved attendance at meetings between administrators and the SAA's directors, as well as at the directors' caucuses. The process whereby input from diverse sources is translated into a proposal presented at the bargaining table was also monitored. Much insight on this facet of collective bargaining was forthcoming from conversations with key bargaining table personnel particularly during the extensive periods of travel to and from the various bargaining sites.

Because of their delicate nature, collective bargaining sessions and caucuses could not be recorded electronically.[5] In an effort to remain unobtrusive in the bargaining situation, the researcher attempted to avoid obvious preoccupation with note taking. Key phrases and words were taken in order to facilitate subsequent recall. When time and location permitted immediately following a session, the researcher committed to paper all that could be recalled from proceedings witnessed. These notes provided the basis for further rewriting and reworking in subsequent days. The observer's location at the bargaining session was also selected to minimize trustee awareness of his presence. Across the table he maintained a view of the teacher committee approximating that afforded the trustees. Meanwhile, his field of vision commanded a relatively unobstructed view of the trustee committee.

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[5] The researcher did obtain access to some transcripts made previously in another SAA during the actual course of collective bargaining. These served as a source of comparison for the researcher as to the accuracy of his own observations.

Observation was conducted at other sites which also had a relevance for analysis of events that transpired during the collective bargaining sessions themselves. For example, the researcher witnessed interaction between SAA directors and local school trustees both at regular zone councils and at local school board meetings. Interviews were conducted with superintendents and other school administrators who had an interest in the outcome of negotiations. Finally, the researcher conversed socially with those trustees whose major involvement in collective bargaining in the SAA being studied, was the actual vote on ratification of the memorandum of agreement. These conversations were supplemented by data derived from a questionnaire administered at school board meetings, and immediately following ratification of the SAA's memorandum of agreement with the teachers.[6] Again, as was the case during the preliminary phase of bargaining preparation, the extensive time taken in travel to and from the various sites provided the opportunity for the researcher to engage the SAA spokesman in conversation on matters arising out of current business.

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[6] In one case, because two jurisdictions scheduled simultaneous ratification meetings, the opinionnaire was administered at the meeting following the ratification vote.

Interviews assumed special importance in so far as the group categorized by the researcher as 'knowledgeable others' were concerned. These people provided him with the means for testing his tentative conclusions formulated during the study's course. 'Knowledgeable others' were people still engaged in school board collective bargaining activity as well as those who had relinquished this responsibility. Some were former ASTA employees. Others were civil servants and school trustees. These individuals were asked during the study to comment on propositions that the researcher had formulated with respect to school board collective bargaining matters. These comments were provided verbally on some occasions. At other times a written memorandum was prepared and subsequently discussed with the respondant.

SUMMARY

A natural history of the study is provided in this chapter for two purposes. Firstly, it is a vehicle whereby the researcher articulates to himself background expectancies, recognition of which is vital as a means for avoiding ethnocentric analysis. It constitutes part of the self-conscious stance that the participant observer assumes when examining his research hypotheses. The reflective approach also serves the chapter's second purpose. This involves disclosure for the reader's benefit. So that the reader may be advantageously placed to assess the observations' accuracy and the study's authenticity, the researcher attempts to maximally reveal the research experience.

Prior to the study, the participant observer's background expectancies were shaped by exposure to two general sets of relevant literature. The first incorporated an extensive body of knowledge associated with industrial relations generally. It failed to suggest a broad synthesis but provided limited and useful insight on the collective bargaining process. The second category conveyed an image of the education political arena which highlighted a contest for power between teachers' and trustees' associations in all Canadian provinces. The Alberta situation was typically portrayed as a pluralistic battleground dominated by the ASTA and the ATA. The Alberta provincial government's role has been characteristically one of broker. Nevertheless, writers attested to its capacity for resistance to pressure mounted by both the ASTA and the ATA.

Submerged within both bodies of literature, a structural-functional orientation was important in shaping the researcher's initial problem formulation for the study. Eventually, the nature of the research data forced reappraisal of the study's basic conceptual foundation. Using the research data as a guide the study was reconceptualized on the basis of the dramatic and game models.

Participant observation constituted the core component for this study. It was conducted at two levels and supplemented with other investigation techniques. The latter were incorporated to compensate for the difficulty which the participant observer confronted in monitoring a broad range of events, many of which could not be anticipated and which were spread over a long time period.

Participant observation was conducted between November, 1973 and April, 1974. During that period the participant observer used the ASTA head office in Edmonton as the research vantage point on a daily basis. Between January, 1974 and May, 1974 he focused observation activity on collective bargaining activities in one SAA. This locale provided data with respect to a complete set of negotiations.

The supplementary research modes included examination of relevant documentary material, attendance at ASTA-sponsored functions, and interviews. The interviews were used as a basic technique for verifying the researcher's observations.

The remaining chapters are devoted to description and analysis that reflects the suppositions and the strategies explained in the preceding paragraphs. The dramatic analogy which underlies the study's analysis is explained in the next chapter's introduction. A description of collective bargaining related interaction as resembling theatrical backstage action follows. In subsequent chapters the parties who actually engage in collective bargaining are described. First, they are described as they go about their interaction 'behind the scenes' with other individuals and groups whose actions shape school board collective bargaining performance. With respect to the latter, frontstage action is illustrated by the development of a typology of performances that characterize school board collective bargaining participation. The collective bargaining environment is described simultaneously as the setting against which these typical performances are rendered. Finally, interaction itself is the target for scrutiny. The interaction that underlies annually announced adjustments to the School Foundation Program Plan is singled out as illustrative of the game-like conduct which is discernable in all facets of school board collective bargaining.

CHAPTER IV

STAGING A THEATRICAL PRODUCTION

I. STAGE MANAGERS AND STAGE HANDS

The Dramatic Analogy

This study examines interaction underlying collective agreements between Alberta school boards and the Alberta Teachers' Association. Theatrical allusions and terminology are used for conceptual clarity and descriptive impact. The dramatugic metaphor relies on the notion that parallels exist between interactional patterns typically associated with theatrical production and those characteristic of collective bargaining in the Alberta education sector. The analogy is not perfect. The dramatic metaphor does not imply that collective bargaining and related activity actually comprise theatrical production.

As is mentioned in the previous chapter, the dramurgic framework for analyzing human interaction is propounded in the many volumes prepared by Erving Goffman. This study depends upon the analogy to highlight several facets of collective bargaining interaction. In the first place, its differentiation between backstage and frontstage activity allows incorporation of political interest group activity within the collective bargaining model. In the theatre, the producer, the director, and other members of the production crew engage in deliberations which "set the stage" and provide scripts and cues for performers. The actors are not totally excluded from this arena. Working behind the scenes, frequently in league with agents and supported by Actors' Equity, they endeavour to secure roles that serve their unique acting talents and career objectives. The audience is cognizant of the backstage interaction dimension. Partial access to this zone of privilege is occasionally extended to select groups of theatre patrons. Moreover, theatrical productions are evaluated in some measure according to producer's and director's effectiveness. Essentially, however, the main focii of audience attention are the stage and the actors who tread the boards.

Frontstage action comprises the second fundamental category delineated for this study by the dramaturgic metaphor. It discriminates between political interest group activity by which the nature of collective bargaining interaction is substantially influenced, and the actual collective bargaining role performance which school boards and teacher locals render in specific settings. The former is analogous to backstage participation. The latter is categorized in this study as resembling frontstage action. Onstage role performance is presumed to consist of two elements. The first concerns prescription. The second involves extemporaneous performance subject to broad constraints inherent in particular situations. Just as actors must exercise their craft subject to backstage direction and limitations dictated by particular theatrical settings, school boards and teacher locals are posited as engaging in performance that is partially prescribed and partially constrained by situational exigencies. This study argues that trustees, teachers, and their collective bargaining assistance, possess varying capacities for extemporaneous role performance.

This chapter focuses attention on the backstage dimension of the dramaturgic metaphor. In the Alberta setting, counterparts for producer, director, and co-director participation are identified. Salient dimensions of their behind-the-scenes interaction and influence are outlined. Other roles performed by public servants are implied. Typically, their activity resembles that which involves the stage manager and the stage hands in a theatrical company. These tasks notably occupy officers of the Board of Industrial Relations and the Department of Education. They are not singled out for detailed consideration, largely because insufficient data were collected during field research. Evidence suggests that these categories are describable within the backstage interaction analogy.

BACKSTAGE PARTICIPANTS

1. The Producer

The entity responsible for the financial and administrative aspects of a dramatic entertainment is generally identified as its producer. Where the dramaturgic analogy is extended to encompass education collective bargaining, the legislature of the province of Alberta may be cast in the role of producer. Its authority derives constitutionally from the British North America Act of 1867, and in particular from Section 93 which states in part, "In and for each Province the legislature may exclusively make laws in relation to education . . . ." The producer's major financial task involves persuasion of potential shareholders that the proposed production will be sufficiently popular with audiences that a satisfactory return upon investment will be forthcoming. For the legislature, and in particular the governing party, the producer's task resembles that of convincing the taxpayer as to the wisdom of investing public revenue in education generally, and in teacher salaries in particular.

In so far as the administrative aspect of production is concerned, the producer assembles a company and delegates responsibility for various facets of the operation. Similarly, the provincial legislature has created a centralized and a decentralized component for administration of education in the province of Alberta. The centralized component consists of the Department of Education whose senior official, the deputy minister, is responsible to the Minister of Education. The Minister and the Cabinet are responsible to the Legislature. Local school authorities comprise the decentralized component. These authorities derive mandatory and discretionary powers from statute passed by the Legislature. Most prominent among these is The School Act which in specific instances grants to the Minister and Department of Education regulatory powers over certain aspects of education as it is provided to local citizens.

The Minister of Education in Alberta does not hold direct authority for administration of the statute which governs labour relations between school boards and the ATA. The Minister of Manpower and Labour[1] holds this jurisdiction under The Alberta Labour Act. The cooperation which this administrative relationship mandates at the governmental level is conceptualized in the dramatic analogy as the relationship between a director and a co-director. Metaphorically, the province relies on the joint efforts of these two directors to shape a production that is convincing to both the school trustees and the teachers, as well as the public generally. That is to say, the onstage performers must be induced to invest confidence in the ritual so that they will adequately fulfill their planned roles. Secondly, the producer's revenues and the producer's capacity to stay in business hinges upon the success which the overall spectacle enjoys with the audience. Consequently, the means by which the two ministers fulfill their Education and Labour portfolio responsibilities are crucial to all facets of collective bargaining and dispute resolution in the Alberta education sector.

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[1] The Manpower portfolio was removed from the Minister of Labour's jurisdiction in 1975 and incorporated with Advanced Education as the Department of Advanced Education and Manpower.

2. The Senior Director

The interpretive aspects of film, television, radio, and live theatre, are substantially prerogatives exercised by directors. Metaphorically, the Minister of Education directs the collective bargaining drama, while denying that this could possibly be the case. The Minister and departmental officials affect a public posture of studied indifference in the face of allegations that their actions shape collective bargaining outcomes. They cite The Alberta Labour Act's provisions that invest responsibilities in the office of the Minister of Manpower and Labour, as well as the Board of Industrial Relations. Proudfoot (1974) has, however, clearly outlined the basic dimensions of the provincial education authority's pervasive influence in matters effecting education locally. This study reveals that this provincial intrusion is no less significant in matters that relate specifically to collective bargaining.

Allegations of unwarranted intervention countered by protestations that the Department of Education desires school boards and teachers to settle their own differences constitutes recurring themes in public exchanges between the ASTA and the ATA on the one hand, and the Minister of Education on the other. For example, the Minister of Education, the Hon. R. Clarke, explained the new School Act's objectives to the ATA in the following terms:

> I wish to explain two particular principles . . . evident in the new School Act. First, we intend to create a climate in which local school boards have the freedom to administer in a wide range of

> educational policy matters on their own recognizance. More than that, we wish the local school boards to accept the responsibility of making any decisions concerning the practice of education within their jurisdictions; the priority of programs, the organization of instruction and facilities, and accountability to their electors.
> (Minister's Reaction to ATA Submission on the New School Act, 1970: mimeographed document).

Ministerial concern that local school trustees are not sufficiently assertive in accepting the challenge implicit in the Act is reiterated in addresses delivered before assemblies sponsored by the ASTA as well as in comments published by the media. These observations characteristically exhort trustees to demonstrate leadership to local ratepayers by showing their capacity to "grasp the nettle."

Nevertheless, the Minister is unequivocal in claiming the right to assert leadership and direction for the overall educational endeavour in the province. Typical of this point of view are his remarks reported in the Lethbridge Herald on March 19, 1974.

> Mr. Hyndman says there is an obligation on government to play some type of leadership role in education because it is responsible to the taxpayers for the money it collects from them.
>
> 'I would disagree with the contention that all school money should be paid by the provincial government without any strings attached.'
>
> That would mean that 'there is no responsibility on the department of education or the legislature in terms of general directions and emphasis and thrusts of education.'
>
> The department began offering financial incentives to school boards so they would begin to develop programs in areas where educational needs were evident.

The provincial directorship leaves its imprint upon school board collective bargaining as a consequence of strategic intervention. Two basic sources of power facilitate this intrusion. The first devolves upon the provincial authority's task in financing the overall education enterprise. The second arises out of this same authority's constitutional and statutory obligation to provide an education service for the society-at-large.

The Fiscal Dimension of Provincial Directorship

Two important statistics reflect the potential influence which the Minister and Department of Education may exert in the directorship of the collective bargaining spectacle. In the first place, teacher salaries which comprise the main item for deliberation at the bargaining table consume on the average 67.8 per cent of funds expended by school boards annually (ASTA Estimate: November 29, 1973). The second set of statistics portrays the extensive commitment undertaken by the province in funding school board operations. In its 1975 report, the Minister's Advisory Committee on School Finance estimates that funds obtained out of local initiative through supplementary requisition on the local tax bases comprised only $88,325,000 or 15.44 per cent of local school board revenue. When considered along with the corporate assessment of 26 mills for SFPP fund[2] purposes, the total local contribution comprises 24.5 per cent as compared with 71.1 per cent that is forthcoming from provincial general revenue.

No less important to the strength and viability of the directorship, is the director's demonstrated capacity to regulate the flow of revenue to school boards in such a way as to exert considerable influence over collective bargaining performance and outcomes. This regulatory power provides a focus for intensive offstage interaction between school boards and their teacher employees on the one hand, with the Minister and his deputies in the civil service on the other. Performing an agency function for the former, the ASTA and the ATA indulge in political interest group activity as a means of swaying the latter's decisions (Odynak 1963; Roberts 1966). This facet of interaction between director, theatrical agents, and/or actors, is considered subsequently in the context of a game framework. For the purpose of outlining the director's position in terms of the overall educational finance spectrum however, a brief resume of recent developments is necessitated.

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[2] SFPP as noted in definitions, is the abbreviation for School Foundation Program Plan. In some official documents it is alternatively abbreviated SFPF for School Foundation Program Fund.

Historical review of school board funding patterns. Before establishing the first SFPP for Alberta school finance, the Legislature had required that school boards utilize municipal revenue collected locally through a tax on property. Supplementary requisition was, and remains, the term attached to a local school board's levy on municipal revenue for special funding. In addition, special grants out of provincial general revenue were forthcoming to supplement local funding. Metaphorically, the collective bargaining spectacle's actors depended upon that which the audience was prepared to pay at the box office, or perhaps throw onto the stage at the conclusion of performance. During times of particular financial hardship, the capacity to evoke the producer's and the senior director's sympathy became an imperative. Traditionally, their largess has always been vital to school board collective bargaining. With the new SFPP in 1961, and particularly since its revision in 1970, the mode of ritual involved in its bestowal has become increasingly important to articulation of province-wide collective bargaining performance.

Local collection of education revenue through the property tax was continued with the introduction of the SFPP in 1961. Nevertheless a basic procedural modification ensued. For SFPP purposes each jurisdiction was required to collect a uniform levy upon an equalized assessment on property throughout the province. Funds thus collected, along with the provincial government's contribution, were pooled in the SFPP fund trust account as the basis for guaranteeing a universal minimum education standard for all jurisdictions. Disbursements from the SFPP fund were channelled to local school authorities according to Department of Education regulations. In addition, the practice of supplementary requisition and payment of special grants from the Department of Education were retained.

A major revision to the SFPP in 1970 coincided with initiation of austerity in the realm of provincial regulation of spending for education purposes. The major grant to school boards was adjusted for payment on a classroom unit plus support staff basis. A flexibility factor allowed school boards to decide their spending priorities for each of the three years following. However, the overall ceiling which the new grant structure effected was sufficient to force wide-spread retrenchment in school board spending. "Hard control" on local supplementary requisition reinforced the cut-backs. School boards intending to requisition beyond the allowed 6 per cent annual escalation were required to secure local approval through plebiscite.

At the commencement of the second three-year cycle in 1973, this provision was replaced with "soft control" on supplementary requisition. Where a school board chose to requisition beyond its maximum allowable by departmental regulation, a plebiscite became mandatory only upon petition for a vote. In that year the escalation factor in the provincial grant was pegged at 7 1/2 per cent and this applied also to supplementary requisition. For 1974 the instructional grant escalation was adjusted to a level approximating 9 per cent, and eventually to 15 per cent in 1975. In each case the actual escalation remained subject to per pupil enrolment distributed between Elementary, Junior High, and Senior High school levels. Table 1 contains details of the specific weightings and funding applied at each level.

TABLE 1

PER PUPIL GRANTS AND RELATIVE WEIGHTINGS
FOR THE YEARS 1973-74 INCLUSIVE

Year		Per Pupil Amount $	Per Pupil Weighting
1973	Elementary	558	1.00
	Junior High	652	1.17
	Senior High	948	1.70
1974	Elementary	622	1.00
	Junior High	716	1.15
	Senior High	996	1.60
1975	Elementary	739	1.00
	Junior High	813	1.10
	Senior High	1108	1.50

The 7 1/2 per cent escalation ceiling on supplementary requisitions was retained in 1974, while instructional spending funding increased by 9 per cent. In 1975 both categories were allowed to escalate by 15 per cent.

Legal Considerations Underlying the Senior Director's Imprint on the School Board Collective Bargaining Spectacle

The second basic source of power available to the Minister of Education, as director of the collective bargaining spectacle, resides in rational-legal considerations associated with provincial education legislation generally.

Whereas in the private sector, parties to collective bargaining are relatively unrestrained by third party intervention or regulation, such legislation as The Teaching Profession Act, The Department of Education Act, The School Act, and The Teachers' Retirement Fund Act, bear either directly or indirectly upon the nature and scope of school board collective bargaining. The Minister of Education and the Department of Education retain numerous responsibilities with regard to administration of these provincial statutes. Consequently, occasions arise during the course of collective bargaining, whereupon these provincial education authorities intrude upon the relationship between school boards and teachers.

For example, the ATA enjoys the advantage of the closed shop guaranteed by The Teaching Profession Act. The ATA is cognizant that it enjoys this privilege at the government's pleasure a not insignificant component of which constitutes the Minister of Education's predisposition. The Minister's role also comprises a critical variable in the question of whether school boards enjoy equally with their private sector counterparts, the right to lock out employees in the event of bargaining impasse. In requests to the government that teacher collective bargaining be placed under special public service statute, the ASTA argues that school boards are effectively denied the right to lockout. It bases its claim on the implications of Section 140 of The School Act which requires the Minister's approval for school closures other than for periods designated elsewhere in statute. The ASTA contends that in view of the Minister's responsibilities of office, approval for a lockout would be an unlikely eventuality. The Association officers note that in the event of a lockout, the Minister's interpretation as to whether the school boards would have the legal right to withhold teacher salaries, would almost certainly govern the lockout's effectiveness.

The scope of collective agreements is also abridged by legislation such as The School Act. Decisions on whether to retain, increase, or diminish, the extent to which provincial legislation intrudes upon the area in which employee-employer relations are commonly governed by collective bargaining, are not taken by the provincial government without first considering the advice of the Minister of Education. Consequently, such potential bargaining table items as teacher transfers, administrative designation, termination of employment and salary payment procedures, all imply an interaction dimension that occurs behind the scenes and involves actors and their director.

Even in instances where the Minister and the Department of Education claim impartiality, the provincial presence has become such an integral part of local education, that teachers and trustees experience difficulty in perceiving this detachment. The problem has been exemplified by their reactions to alleged departmental interference in recent strikes. In two such cases, action taken by the Minister, ostensibly for the purpose of maintaining the Department of Education's neutrality, has become a crucial factor in shaping the subsequently formed orientation of the teachers and school boards toward the work stoppage as a means for resolving disputes. In two recent strikes by school teachers, the Minister has exercised discretionary authority in withholding from the strike-bound jurisdictions those SFPP monies that normally would be paid as teacher salaries. An obvious rationale for this measure is that otherwise, school boards might be encouraged to force teachers into a strike situation in order to "make money" on salaries withheld. The logic underlying this is buttressed by the observation that a strike-bound plant cannot manufacture goods for a profit. School trustees react against the practice of withholding funds and against the Department's decision to refuse the use of its correspondence school material in strike-bound schools. An ASTA staff paper documents these objections.

> Because of their timing and accompanying publicity both actions were regarded by the . . . Trustees as partisan actions in favour of the position of the A.T.A..
>
> It is questionable that the withholding of funds set aside for school operations during strikes actually has any bearing on the balance of power between the parties.
>
> The Department of Education would have been better advised to have remained silent and to do nothing than to have pursued the course of action it took. (Mimeographed Document January, 1972).

Regardless of the merits of the Department's actions, the case illustrates the essential dilemma which provincial education authorities face in attempting to remain aloof from local school board collective bargaining disputes.

3. The Co-Director

In addition to the producer's role assigned the provincial government, and directorship attributed to the Minister of Education, the dramaturgic allusion suggests co-directorship as a discripter for functions typically performed by the Alberta Minister of Manpower and Labour. The Alberta Labour Act and The School Act assign the minister the requisite authority. Also, these statutes designate the ATA as official bargaining agent for teachers employed by Alberta school boards. The labour code outlines conventions which the parties must observe when collective bargaining disputes arise. The Minister and officials of the Department of Manpower and Labour[3] perform the vital administrative or backstage function of policing the parties' observation of these conventions.[4] The administrative function requires performance of a variety of tasks. In the education collective bargaining milieu two particular sets of tasks are crucial. The first concerns protocol at the commencement of the bargaining relationship. The second involves public policy in the event of impasse between the parties. The Minister and the Department of Manpower and Labour shape onstage performance by overseeing actor conformity to procedural norms. More decisively, their approaches to dispute settlement exert a profound influence upon actors at the bargaining table.

The Alberta Labour Act specifies procedures and time limits to which management and labour must adhere when initiating a new round of collective bargaining. Because most teacher collective agreements until quite recently expired on August 31 immediately at the close of the two-month summer recess, considerable difficulty was encountered in satisfying the requirements of the labour law with regard to opening collective bargaining. The BIR, for the sake of expediency, did not apply regulations with the same rigour as might have been the case in other sectors. Since 1970 most collective agreements have been negotiated to coincide with the calendar year rather than the school year. Therefore, the need for departmental flexibility on this matter has been virtually eliminated. The question of whether school boards have the right to form employers' associations is another issue which recently has been removed from departmental discretion. In 1966 school boards began to examine the legal framework seeking clauses from which advantage could be won. One outcome of these deliberations was the conclusion that existing statute did not preclude school boards from exercising a right enjoyed by other employers to unite for the purpose of negotiating with employees. The ATA reacted against this challenge to traditional practice. Consequently, the Minister and Department of Labour became the focus of pressure from trustees and teachers. The need for a ruling was eliminated in 1970 when section 65(7) was incorporated within the revised School Act specifying a school board's right to engage in this mode of bargaining.

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[3] Within the Department of Manpower and Labour, officials of the Board of Industrial Relations (hereafter designated BIR) play a major role in staging the school board collective bargaining spectacle.

[4] Subsequent discussion of the conciliation process will reveal that these officials' tasks are not solely confined to behind-the-scenes performance.

In the second area, that of implementation of public policy with respect to dispute settlement, the role of the provincial labour authorities is crucial. Essentially, Alberta follows the traditional Canadian orientation toward impasse resolution in employer-employee collective bargaining.[5] This underlying philosophy is such that strikes are legally condoned only following public investigation and reporting of impasses. The same procedure is prerequisite for employers who wish to institute a lockout. The investigation and reporting mechanism that is tied to the compulsory collective bargaining procedure is commonly referred to as conciliation. By definition, the use of the term conciliation to describe the Alberta dispute settlement procedure is something of a misnomer. A conciliator, in the strictest sense, is one who overcomes hostility and distrust between individuals or groups. A review of the conciliation process as it operates in disputes between school boards and the ATA discloses an undertaking by the Minister of Manpower and Labour in conjunction with associates, that is only marginally conciliatory in both intent and effect.

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[5] Revision of the Alberta Labour Act in 1973, modified procedure and provided for greater Ministerial discretion without departing from traditional policy with respect to dispute settlement and collective bargaining.

The Legal Dimension of Conciliation. Since 1948 Canadian public policy has mandated a two-phased conciliation procedure. The Alberta Labour Act until 1973, also relied exclusively on that model. Subsequently, the provincial statute makes provision for alternative routes to dispute settlement. Essentially however, it remains predicated on the principle that labour and management should postpone punitive action until such time as government-sponsored fact finding and reporting allows public opinion to focus pressure on disputing parties.

In the event of a bargaining impasse, collective bargaining parties are required to notify the Minister of Manpower and Labour. The notice entails a request for appointment of a conciliator.[6] The Minister exercises discretion in deciding whether a dispute does exist in fact. This decision, of itself becomes the subject for backstage interaction between government, school boards and teachers. Where a dispute is deemed to exist, the Minister appoints a third party to investigate and assist the contending groups to settle their differences. The terms conciliator or conciliation commissioner are used in common parlance to identify this individual. Frequently, BIR staff officers act in this capacity. In the event that a collective agreement is not reached in this first phase of intervention, the Minister may again exercise discretion when initiating the next phase. The ministerial choice at this point, also creates considerable behind-the scenes lobbying.

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[6] The parties may not resort to strike or lockout even if a collective agreement has expired at the time of a dispute. All steps in the Conciliation procedure, as are required by the Minister, must first be exhausted.

Prior to revision of The Alberta Labour Act in 1973, usual procedure was for the conciliator to write a report which school boards and the ATA would accept as a collective agreement basis, or as a spur for progress toward agreement. However, if the two sides could not agree, the Minister appointed a tripartite conciliation board comprising one nominee for each of the disputing parties and a chairman. Where no agreement upon the chairman was possible, the position was filled through appointment by the provincial labour authority. In the new act, this alternative has been retained. If the conciliator is of the opinion that further investigation and reporting will prove of no avail, a report to the Minister recommending that the second step be waived in favour of application for strike vote or lockout is allowable. The Minister may accept or reject this recommendation. Rejection would imply that the Minister requires information of the type supplied by a conciliation board. A further innovation in the new legislation applies where the conciliator's report is given the same status by the Minister as that of a conciliation board. This device saves the time and resources involved in executing the second step of the dispute settlement procedure. In this instance, as is normal with conciliation board reports,[7] the employees and employer(s) are required to consider and vote as to whether the report should constitute their collective agreement.

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[7] This report is sometimes referred to as an award.

If agreement fails to eventuate, either party may then apply to the Minister for formal permission to approve and undertake strike or lockout action. Only upon observing statutory regulations governing the taking of this decision as well as service of notice, are the parties legally entitled to implement punitive action. Meanwhile, there is nothing in this procedure to prevent the Minister and/or ministerial appointees acting in a mediatory capacity to avert confrontation where the parties are amenable to such intervention.

These attempts to mediate a dispute frequently carry the provincial official into the realm which in terms of the dramatic analogy would be recognized as frontstage or onstage performance. This portrayal is particularly difficult to avoid in the event of a strike by teachers. While the teachers have the legal right to strike, the Minister also has statutory authority to intervene for the purposes of terminating a strike. Section 106 of The Alberta Labour Act, 1970 and Section 163 of The Alberta Labour Act, 1973 stipulate that a strike or lockout may be terminated in the event that "extreme privation or human suffering has been caused by any stoppage of services or work over an extended period of time." The Minister's discretion applies in determining the extent to which a given stoppage warrants intervention on these emergency grounds. Where, at the expiration of fifteen teaching days, the Minister invoked this emergency power to terminate one teacher strike in December of 1971 and another in April of 1973, an arbitrator was appointed to resolve items remaining in dispute between the ATA and school boards.

The discretionary dimensions of Conciliation. The review of the legal aspects of Conciliation reveals key points at which the Minister's intervention has a crucial bearing on the course of disputes between school boards and the ATA. Reports are used by the parties when justifying their respective bargaining postures. They calculate strategies in terms of previous experience with decisions and actions of the Minister and the BIR. Moreover, they approach collective bargaining in such a way as to influence governmental intervention.

Periodically, debate between teachers, school boards and government, is generated over the question of whether in fact the former are regarded as a special category for treatment under the Alberta Labour Act. At the most general level the ASTA insists that if such is the case, there exists justification for exclusion in favour of a statute geared to the circumstances unique to education (ASTA Brief to the Minister, 1972). In specific instances however, the question of whether a special standard is applied to school board-teacher disputes has generated acrimony. For example, in 1969 school trustees challenged traditional BIR practice in mermitting the ATA to disregard statute in the procedures employed to secure teacher approval or rejection of conciliation board reports.

Evidence support the contention that provincial labour authorities invoke the maximum number of manoeuvres available for purposes of delaying and/or averting strikes by teachers. Furthermore, this pressure is not diminished with the onset of a strike. This is not to imply that a uniform style is in evidence. One senior official of the Department of Manpower and Labour noted a change in emphasis for example, between that in vogue during the years of Social Credit government and that demonstrated by the Conservative government which succeeded it. Formally, he alleges, the officials in the Premier's office and the Labour department, remained alert for signs that particular school jurisdictions might become embroiled in a strike by teachers. Before the situation could deteriorate, informal government intervention was initiated and, allegedly, the public was spared the inconvenience of school closures. The interviewee expressed dissatisfaction with the Conservative administration's laxity and the apparent increase in teacher strikes. (Field Notes: February 6, 1974).

Experience reported by those involved in teacher strikes since the change in government does not indicate that the Executive's concern over work stoppages has greatly diminished. For example, in an interview reported in the ATA News (January 31, 1974) the Minister of Manpower and Labour emphasized the inevitability of government intervention where teachers withdraw their service. He noted, "Education is compulsory, it is in the interest of the state, in the interest of the individual." He refused to attach a time framework within which teachers and school boards would be allowed to settle their own differences during the course of a stoppage. However, he adamantly denied that two previous cases in which teacher strikes were terminated after loss of fifteen school days, constituted precedent for future intervention.

> It would be unfortunate if there is the conclusion, or the feeling, or the apprehension, by teachers--or their organization, the ATA--on the one hand, or trustees--or their organization, the ASTA--on the other, that the government would intervene in all withdrawals of service or lockouts after three weeks. That is simply not the case. (ATA News January 31, 1974).

For the Minister, the crucial factor in any government decision on termination of a school teacher strike was the presence or otherwise of indicators that the school jurisdiction and the ATA were moving toward settlement.

Failure to detect "movement toward a settlement" had prompted the government to order teachers to return to work in April of 1973, the ATA News article reported. This perspective on the work stoppage is at variance with that which would suggest that a strike's value resides in the domain of permitting the disputing parties to subject their respective bargaining positions to the ultimate test of power, part of which consists of a capacity to 'wait out' a stoppage. In the private sector governments have demonstrated considerable patience in allowing the latter. During 1973 and 1974 the Alberta government manifested similar patience with strikes by municipal employees and even school employees not engaged in classroom instruction.

While the ATA questions the Minister of Manpower and Labour over apparent inconsistency in the government's attitude to strikes by teachers, the ASTA expresses dissatisfaction with its refusal to place teacher collective bargaining in a special category requiring special legislation.

> In spite of substantive assertions that teachers, as employees are governed by the Labour Act, the Department of Labour representatives appear to consider strike action by teachers and the disruption of "education" as actions unbecoming the parties. It is a paradox, perhaps, that if this attitude is an expression of political distaste for teacher strikes, it has not heretofore produced any serious consideration for special legislation governing teacher-school board collective bargaining.
> (ASTA Mimeographed document: January 14, 1972)

The Association's point of view is reiterated in a letter drafted by the Economic Services department director to the Minister on October 18, 1973. Observing that the government's policy "seems to require school employer-employee disputes to be subject to the full, exhaustive weight of due process," the ASTA staff officer expressed disappointment that the revised

Alberta Labour Act had not specifically excluded teacher-school board collective bargaining. The ASTA's submission had expressly suggested an alternative piece of legislation that would allegedly account for the unique forces extant in the school board setting.

The ASTA staff officers also express their dissatisfaction with intrusion by senior provincial labour officials on perceived local school board bargaining prerogatives. An ASTA memorandum reporting events that transpired during a strike exemplifies this resentment.

> Immediately prior to the strike and during its initial week the mediation officers of the Department (of Labour) were busy attempting to get the parties to meet. Their attitudes suggested meet 'at all costs', to an extent of escalating the (school boards') position, in spite of its reasonableness. These officers expressed extreme consternation at the negotiators' lack of interest in meeting just for the sake of meeting. Evidence indicated that these men were under orders to 'get the parties together' regardless of the cost or reason. They failed to accept the premise that school boards, like other employers, were amply prepared to subject the dispute to a test of a strike.

Conversely, conversation with a BIR official produces opinion that places responsibility squarely with the bargaining table participants themselves. Essentially, this BIR viewpoint decries the apparent unwillingness of school boards to get down to the real business of collective bargaining until they have exhausted the conciliation process and the employees are carrying a strike vote 'in their pocket'. For the Department, the major problem concerns finding some way of eliminating the ATA's and the school boards' predisposition to 'come running' for answers from the government immediately upon encountering difficulties in bargaining.

The source of this predisposition to extend school board collective bargaining into the provincial political arena from the local or regional level, cannot readily be located with any particular entity. Joint responsibility can be illustrated with an example arising in one of the earliest tests of the revised conciliation procedure in 1974. The Alberta Labour Act of 1973 proposes alternative Conciliation routes, subject to choice by the Minister for Manpower and Labour. Where, for instance, a conciliation officer encounters such intransigence that drafting of a report on a likely zone of settlement between the parties is impossible, the Minister may be advised that they be allowed to test the strike/lockout alternative immediately. During the first week of March, 1974 the conciliator assigned to a collective bargaining dispute between the ATA and one SAA, notified the parties that such a recommendation had been forwarded to the Minister of Manpower and Labour. This news was greeted with consternation. The disputing parties were amendable to suggestions that some form of mediation be attempted before the Minister would rule on the commissioner's suggestion. During the course of an "extra conciliation" session, agreement was secured on items of marginal importance. With neither party enthusiastically countenancing the possibility of a test of strength in the form of strike or lockout, the Minister announced appointment of a conciliation board to investigate the dispute. ASTA officers expressed private disappointment at the Minister's alleged acquiescance in the face of ATA political pressure. Nevertheless, when it was suggested that a formal Association reaction might therefore be in order, they demurred, arguing that the school boards involved might prefer to register displeasure with the Minister privately. When no public reaction was forthcoming from these boards in subsequent weeks, the reason given was that to remonstrate with the BIR and the Minister at that point would be most unwise in view of the potentially untoward effects such action might incur with respect to substance of the conciliation board's report. Essentially, the impression prevailed that the ATA and the school boards involved were relieved at the reinstatement of the third party presence. As a postscript to the incident, two months later they signed an agreement on terms reported by the conciliation board.

SUMMARY

Collective bargaining between teachers and school boards is posited as resembling dramatic performance. To the extent that the analogy is appropriate, the part played by provincial government authorities in staging the collective bargaining spectacle may be equated with the functions and duties performed by offstage personnel in a theatrical company. With the notable exception of but a few key personalities, those who work backstage in a theatrical company remain concealed beyond the glare of the footlights in order that the audience may more easily accomplish suspension of disbelief. The latter help actors to achieve closure on convincing performance. In the entertainment world, the director and producer of a performance are least likely to escape the attention of audience, critics, and the general public. Likewise, where collective bargaining is undertaken, the Premier and Cabinet, and particularly the ministers holding Education and Labour portfolios, comprise the personalities most likely to have anonymity elude them. Nevertheless, they have at their disposal subtle devices that mitigate audience awareness of their presence during actual performance. These instruments which include control over the purse strings, as well as discretionary authority in statute administration, allow for deflection of blame for indifferent performance on to the actors, while retaining for the producer and director effective control over all participants.

The actors, recognizing that stage hands and their superiors are indispensible to convincing performance, divide their energies between onstage performance for the sake of audience approval on the one hand, and on the other, intensive offstage interaction with others in the theatrical company. These behind-the-scenes initiatives encompass a broad gamut of performance-related detail. Funding levels and disbursement formulas constitute items of vital concern. Those individuals and groups within the director's staff, responsible for determining the scope within which the actors are allowed to perform onstage, are also subject to actor pressure. The type of accommodation which the actors may achieve as they work toward resolution of their onstage disputes, frequently bears the imprint of offstage influence transmitted through a variety of cues forthcoming from the wings. The source of these signals, in this case the Department of Manpower and Labour, cannot be overlooked by the actors as they strive on many fronts simultaneously to optimize the effect of their respective performances. Such interaction typifies that which transpires between actors in the first instance, and script writers, prompters, lighting crews, as well as any other entity involved in stage management.

Not only do the actors confront heavy demands as part of their participation in the collective bargaining scenario, but also, they must meet commitments in other productions being staged simultaneously. To ameliorate the drain on their resources and to enhance their impact with audiences, as well as producers and directors, they have chosen to call upon the assistance of agents. These agencies perform multiple functions, and on occasion, become involved in onstage performance themselves. The next chapter addresses attention to the agency function performed on behalf of school boards, by the ASTA.

CHAPTER V

STAGING A THEATRICAL PRODUCTION

II. ONE THEATRICAL AGENT AND ITS CLIENTS

The 'Theatrical Agent' Analogy: Its Rationale

An agent is one authorized to act on behalf of another. For example, in the theatre an artist may employ an agent to secure bookings with theatrical companies and to negotiate the best possible price for services. The theatrical agent may also perform promotional duties for the principal. This type of activity serves to enhance the principal's image and maintain the actor's visibility with producers, directors, and audiencies. In a strict legal sense, the relationship between the ASTA and its member school boards is not one of principal and agent.[1] Nevertheless, in the realm of education political interest group activity, the ASTA is recognized by the provincial government and its departments as a leading spokesman for school boards in Alberta. The original objects, powers and purposes underlying The Alberta School Trustees' Association Act of 1939 support this observation. Some of these were:

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[1] ASTA Economic Services is exploring ramifications of Section 150 of the revised Alberta Labour Act which may permit school boards to delegate to the ASTA responsibility for collective bargaining and vest in the Association representative authority to conclude an agreement.

(a) to consider and deal with matters relating to education and school administration in the Province with a view to the betterment thereof;

(b) to provide a medium for expression of the views and suggestions of the school trustees of the Province on matters pertaining to education;

(c) to render advice and assistance to its members on matters affecting them;

(d) to promote the interests of school districts and school divisions throughout the Province;

(e) to cooperate for the promotion, guidance and improvement of legislation on educational school questions;

(f) generally, to do all acts and things that appear to the Association conducive to the good and welfare (i) of education in the Province, or (ii) of any one or more school districts or school divisions.

In other words, the relationship intended for school boards and the ASTA remains comparable with less formalized facets of an actor-agent liaison. School boards enjoy voluntary access to an intermediary in whom the provincial government through legislation, has invested recognition. In the theatre, actors and actresses may take advantage of the services of those agencies which have established rapport with producers and directors. Theatrical agents attend to actors' career interests by supplying information accumulated from interaction with show business officials. They also negotiate advantageous employment terms and conditions. Some actors prefer to freelance, assuming responsibility for their own careers and performance. In this regard, those school boards which choose to pay annual membership in the ASTA but deliberately remain aloof where collective bargaining is involved, may be categorized as 'freelancers'.

Another category of performer is bound by rules governing conduct in the acting profession. For example Actors' Equity exerts considerable influence in the world of the performing arts in North America. The analogy between Actors' Equity and the role of the ATA as bargaining agent for all locals is imperfect. In the first place, as bargaining agent, the ATA becomes involved more frequently than the ASTA as an onstage performer. Secondly, whereas there is virtually universal membership by artists and ancillary personnel in associations like Actors' Equity, only the teacher and administrator segment in the education collective bargaining milieu hold membership. Nevertheless, to the extent that the ATA is the teachers' statutory bargaining agent and works as a political interest group on behalf of its membership, the analogy, albeit imperfect is sufficient for this exercise's explanatory purpose.

THE ASTA AS 'THEATRICAL AGENT' FOR SCHOOL BOARDS

Historical Outline

Responding to an invitation from Alberta's Premier and Minister of Education, the Hon. A. C. Rutherford, sixty delegates attended the first provincial school trustee assembly in Edmonton on January 23 and 24, 1907. A constitution and list of objectives were subsequently drafted, but as a force in provincial politics, the trustees' organization remained inconspicuous for more than a decade. In 1921, the Minister of Education in the Liberal government reacted to formation of a fledgling teachers' alliance by calling on school trustees to assemble in Calgary. With the convening of 1,200 representatives who responded to the Hon. G. P. Smith's rallying call, a stormy period of confrontation and conflict in Alberta's education history was launched. Kratzman (1963) describes the period as one during which the Minister was repeatedly called upon to act as political arbiter in situations where the ASTA adamantly opposed ATA initiatives. Nevertheless Bailey (1956), Swan (1961), and Brown (1963), suggest that during these conflicts the provincial government was also given to exercising a will of its own. The reversal of policy which followed election of the Social Credit government in 1935 illustrates this. Between 1935 and 1941, the ATA's fortunes were ascendant as the new government reacted favourably in granting most of the ATA's original welfare objectives. Meanwhile, the ASTA, notwithstanding legal recognition granted in 1939, endured the same period with its fortunes at a low ebb.[2]

Formal Organization of the ASTA

Not until the nineteen sixties did the ASTA embark upon reorganization that constituted something of a renaissance in school trustee political influence at the provincial level.[3] In 1963 the office of Executive Director was created for the Association. The permanent staff component for whom an Executive Director is responsible to the ASTA Executive Council was subsequently increased and departmentalized. In 1974 this service branch comprised eleven professional officers holding responsibilities for educational, economic, public relations, data processing, and legal services. The largest department in terms of personnel was Economic Services with four officers. According to a working paper providing details of a staff program budget for 1974, this department's share of the ASTA's resources was approximately 23-30 percent. Its major time investment involved negotiating, consulting, influencing, information gathering, analysis, seminars and workshops.

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[2] Detailed account of the ASTA's history is contained in Roberts (1966) and in a volume currently in the course of preparation by an Association staff officer.

[3] Unlike the ATA, the ASTA does not enjoy a compulsory membership privilege. School boards may opt out of membership by submitting written advice of its intention two months prior to the year in question. Otherwise, the annual membership fee is deducted from the first SFPP payment and forwarded to the ASTA.

At the provincial level, the Service Branch of the Association is responsible to the Executive branch. The Executive Director and the Secretary Treasurer act in the capacity of non-voting table officers with the Executive which is composed of officials elected from trustee ranks. Table officers with voting privileges include the ASTA President, its First and Second Vice-Presidents, as well as a Past President. These officials are subject to nomination and election by the membership at the Annual Convention.

Other Executive branch representation is provided by thirteen school trustees, seven of whom are designated by each of the ASTA's seven zones. Six other trustees are selected to represent the four Metro Boards. The Executive Council which meets at approximately two-month intervals, and more frequently should circumstances require, is responsible for the Association's direction in the period that elapses between Annual Conventions.

According to the ASTA's formal organization chart, the Annual Convention permits school trustees to perform the Association's legislative function. All Alberta school board members are eligible to attend and vote upon ordinary resolutions. In the absence of a call for use of weighted ballots, convention resolutions may be carried by show of hands. Weighted ballots designed to provide greater voting power for urban jurisdictions, are required for election of office bearers.

At an intermediate level, provision exists for school board consultation on a zone basis. In addition to six geographic zones, the ASTA has created a seventh to accommodate the interests of the Catholic separate school districts. Trustees from each of these zones confer periodically and their decisions are communicated to the ASTA Executive Council. Meanwhile these zone councils provide a vehicle for communicating decisions taken at the provincial level. From time to time, the Metro Boards have met in special council which also reports to the Executive Council.

Also reporting to the ASTA Executive Council are its Economic and its Education councils. These two bodies are composed of school trustees and members of the Association's professional staff. The Economic Council has, since its inception in 1967, attempted to influence collective bargaining performance by Alberta school boards. Its creation followed a period during which voluntary and legalistic devices failed to achieve coordination of school board collective bargaining that could rival the masterful efforts of the ATA. As approved in an Executive motion on November 4, 1967, the Economic Council was created with terms of reference extending across a broad spectrum of collective bargaining related matters.

> The Economic Council of the Alberta School Trustees' Association is an expert committee in matters of personnel and labour relations. It is expected to provide leadership to school boards in their employment relationship with all employees in:
>
> (a) wage and salary administration
> (b) employee benefits--pensions, sickness, accident, compassionate leave, etc.
> (c) recruitment, placement, tenure
> (d) in-service training, promotions, leave of absence
> (e) labour relations--collective bargaining, administration of collective agreements

(f) labour legislation and regulations
(ASTA Staff Report 1970:3-4).

In particular, the Economic Council was authorized to provide collective bargaining leadership through formation of long-term objectives as well as guidelines that school boards might observe in current collective bargaining. General policy recommendations are also formulated by ASTA Executive Council.

Between its formation and 1974, the Economic Council underwent transition both with respect to membership and scope of deliberations. Originally it had operated on the basis of ad hoc membership, calling from time to time for the advice of individuals whose experience and expertise in particular areas justified their appointment as members. By 1974 however, a representative form of membership on Economic Council had evolved. One school trustee from each of the six ASTA geographic zones and the four Metro Boards attended regularly scheduled meetings during which procedure pertaining to order and voting became increasingly formal. ASTA Economic Services staff officers continued to attend but were generally excluded from presentation of motions and voting upon motions. They remained responsible however, for preparation of agenda items and provision of resource material. In 1973 and 1974 agenda items extended beyond collective bargaining to include such concerns as school bus transportation, educational finance, and provincial energy policies. Regular meetings of ASTA Economic Council also provided the opportunity for ASTA Economic Services department to call together for consultation, the chairmen of the seven SAA's engaged in collective bargaining on behalf of fifty seven school jurisdictions.

In summary, until 1963, Alberta school boards' attitudes to strong provincial-level organization were characterized by relative indifference. A reversal of opinion is indicated in the ASTA's modern reorganization, the burgeoning in its professional staff complement, and unparalled membership investment in headquarters' facilities and resources. Although the Association is not currently commensurate in scale with the teachers' provincial association, its revised organizational design displays the image of an enterprise mobilized for action on its membership's behalf.

Its unprecedented growth and its newly constructed organization nevertheless conceal several fundamental conflicts which generate ambiguity that, while unresolved, militate against the Association's overall effectiveness. These uncertainties arise from the ASTA's failure to successfully reconcile two apparently disparate interests. The first concerns its overt commitment to enhancement and protection of local school board autonomy. The second involves its objectives as an agent or political lobby for school board interests provincially.

The paradoxical situation and the counterproductive effects arising from failure to cope with this dilemma is illustrated in microcosm by the history and current operations of the Association's Economic Services department. This department's recent expansion accounts for much of the ASTA's growth in recent years. It reflects school boards' heightened consciousness with respect to the potential inherent in joint action on collective bargaining matters. The remainder of this chapter is devoted to examination, firstly, of ASTA policy as it relates to local school board autonomy and school board collective bargaining. Secondly, the Economic Services department's goal and performance are examined with reference to these policies generally, as well as with regard to attitudes and actions which particular school boards display toward ASTA collective bargaining initiatives.

ASTA Policy as it Pertains to School Board Collective Bargaining

During 1965, at the time during which initiatives were underway for enhancement of ASTA services to school boards, the Association's central office staff was augmented with the appointment of an Executive Assistant for Economic Services. A subsequent (1970) report to Executive Council outlines the rationale underlying this appointment.

> Collective bargaining should be a positive vehicle for the operation of school systems, rather than an unplanned reaction on the part of school boards. Accordingly, the attitudes of school board representatives towards teachers, which were alleged to be very negative in many instances, were to be changed if possible.

In the meantime, the ASTA has developed nineteen directives for action based on a policy statement with respect to collective bargaining. The preamble to these directives states in part:

> The Alberta School Trustees' Association believes that collective bargaining is the most practical means of determining the remuneration of employees but that collective bargaining should be restricted to matters of salary, special allowances, sick leave, and other benefits specifically required by law.
> (ASTA Policy Statements 1973:35).

Consistent with this policy, both the written and verbal submissions which the Association presented to the Minister of Manpower and Labour in 1973 on questions arising from revision of The Alberta Labour Act, endorsed continuation of collective bargaining between school boards and teachers. However, because of allegedly confining circumstances originating with subsisting education legislation and unique problems associated with dispute resolution in the education sector, the ASTA urged that the relationship be couched in terms of a special legislative framework.

Complementary to this general labour relations orientation, are the nineteen directives for action which cover a diverse range of collective bargaining matters. Section 10-09 of policy for example, asserts the Association's opposition to protracted collective bargaining. In the area of contract content section 10.15 requires that the ASTA strive for elimination of teacher salary payments on the basis of partial years of professional training. In so far as the bargaining relationship is concerned, section 10.16 opposes compulsory membership of teachers in the ATA, while other sections reject provincial-level control in favour (in principle at least) of regional organization for collective bargaining with the ATA. However, to the extent that the ASTA may be identifiable in the dramatic analogy as a "theoretical agent" for school boards, section 10.05 is important. It states:

> The Association Shall:
>
> Expect the Executive to assume responsibility for establishing a common policy among all members of the Association for guidance in teacher salary negotiations.

Instrumental in drafting this common policy, has been the ASTA Economic Services department and the Association's Economic Council. Assessment of the success encountered in meeting this policy objective requires prior consideration of another facet of ASTA policy namely that concerning lay local control of education. The task of weighing the "provincial" interest against the clients' "local" interests constitutes a dilemma confronting staff officers in daily performance of duty and complicates most ASTA designs in the field of collective bargaining.

ASTA Policy with Regard to Local Autonomy of School Boards

Under the title Lay Control of Education, ASTA policy contains twenty-seven directives for action. Section 5 reads in part:

> The Alberta School Trustees' Association believes in the continuation of, and adherence to the principle of local and lay control of education through elected boards in appropriate jurisdictions. As the service organization for all school boards and committees the Association is dedicated to serving its member boards through personnel and material services in order to maintain a high quality of education through courageous and knowledgable leadership.
>
> The Association Shall:
>
> 5.01 Strive to promote and maintain local interest in, and control of education.
>
> 5.02 Strive for an orderly transfer of power and responsibility from the provincial government to the local school board with respect to all aspects of public education.

This commitment at the philosophic level at least, to local school board autonomy is reflected also in the 1970 submission by the ASTA to the Alberta Commission on Educational Planning. The brief's preface outlines the ideological basis for the paper.

> The main concept expressed in this brief is that an effective public education system can best be developed by increasing the responsibility and powers of the locally elected school boards. Such a board close to the hearts and homes of the electorate, can best respond to the needs of the community, parents, and pupils, who make up the clientele of the schools.

The emphasis is reiterated in such other ASTA documents as those dealing with educational finance generally, and the particular role which the Association's staff officers must perform in providing service to member school boards. It is encapsulated in the summation of the 1974

Finance Conference, "local school autonomy was applauded. We heard nothing to the contrary at this conference." (Field Notes) In later discussion of the actors, reference will be made to those situations wherein school boards cite local autonomy, whether out of expedience or sincere ideological conviction, as underlying rationale for performance. Of immediate concern is the extent to which the apparent commitment to local control impinges upon the ASTA's, and particularly its Economic Services department's, capacity to perform an effective "theatrical agency" function.

The Agency Role to which ASTA Economic Services Department Aspires

Collective bargaining and educational finance matters comprise the areas of primary focus that the ASTA Executive Council designated for the Economic Services department at its October, 1972 meeting. In the area of collective bargaining, the staff job specifications require furtherance of the ASTA's objectives specifically with respect to:

(i) the analysis of pertinent data;
(ii) the preparation of publications;
(iii) the coordination of human resources available;
(iv) the conduct of training programs;
(v) the rendering of direct advice and assistance to member boards and committees; and
(vi) the preparation of recommendations for Executive approval or modification

(ASTA Policy Handbook, Staff Role Specifications Oct/72)

Until 1974 at least, collective bargaining related activities superseded educational finance matters to the extent that they consumed approximately 80 per cent of the Economic Services department's time resources (ASTA 1973 Program Time Distribution survey). Major activities include communication, coordination, analysis, consultation, training, and direct bargaining table service. Transcending all of these activities is the

ASTA's political interest group function participation in which constitutes a major source of contention arising between Economic Services and the Executive. Each major departmental activity is examined in this chapter to reveal situational realities that present obstacles to realization of Economic Services' formal objectives.

1. Communication

Reviewing in December of 1973 the role of ASTA in collective bargaining, the ASTA Economic Services director echoed a report by his predecessor to the Executive in 1970. In both instances communication and coordination were stated as the two overriding concerns. From the department's inception in 1965, communication with school boards constituted a matter of top priority. In subsequent years, emphasis altered, but the essential objective of providing members with information that would facilitate collective bargaining effectiveness was retained. Initially, when local bargaining was universal, the Association issued regular salary bulletins, particularly during periods of maximum bargaining activity. This material supplemented annual statistics and information compiled in the Collective Bargaining Manual, and which is reviewed at zone briefings conducted in September and October by staff officers. As regional bargaining gained wide acceptance in the nineteen seventies, communication between ASTA and member boards became more periodic with staff officers exercising greater selectivity for the purpose of establishing a greater degree of 'in depth' contact at the SAA level.

> Greater reliance was placed upon a more in-depth communication with fewer people. This meant that more personal contact with small groups replaced rather general bulletins which contained mostly salary grid information.
> (Economic Services Position Paper: December, 1973:2)

On a less formal plane, Economic Services personnel attempt to maintain liaison with member boards on a day-to-day basis through attendance at Association seminars, councils, conferences, and conventions. The "clearing house" function is further attempted through telephone service from the Edmonton office, where responses to specific queries from members are frequently augmented with current information on developments in jurisdictions across the province. Quality of service has been impaired however, by relatively high rates of staff turnover which periodically necessitates reestablishment of contact between the Association and member boards. Coupled with realities inherent in the existence of the relatively large number of prospective clients, this phenomena militates against effective realization of the 'clearing house' ideal.

2. Coordination

Not clearly distinguishable from the Association's communications initiatives in the area of collective bargaining, are those pertaining to coordination. Early attempts to coordinate the collective bargaining activities of member boards between 1965 and 1970 were greeted with indifferent success.

> There have been attempts to develop legalized and forced forms of coordination by means of one committee to negotiate all salaries for the province or one salary scale which would be primarily the responsibility of representatives of the provincial government, ASTA and ATA. These

> legalistic approaches . . . failed to gain support of sufficient members of the Association. (Report of Economic Services Director: 1970:2)

Moreover, the report continues (1970:3), where adherence to 'agreements between gentlemen' were incorporated within the coordination strategy, failure was attended by a growth of hostility and cynicism within the membership.

> A second approach has been to develop zone groupings of school boards, commencing in the 1960's, in which the members pledged themselves not to pay more than a fixed level of salaries. This approach was not successful, possibly due to the short supply of teachers, the lack of bargaining skill, and inadequate leadership which allowed the levels to be struck at unreasonably low rates.

While the adoption of regional level bargaining by many Alberta school boards during the nineteen seventies may be perceived as indicative of a more favourable predisposition toward cooperation, a willingness to accept coordination of effort under the aegies of ASTA Economic Services is not readily demonstrable.

One case in point involves the difficulty which Economic Services encounters in securing school board observance of guidelines for salary increases. Another concerns its relative ineffectiveness in persuading the membership to accept bargaining policies and practices upon which the Executive may issue recommendations from time to time. Prior to commencement of collective bargaining activity in any given year, ASTA Economic Council has addressed its attention to development of guidelines for teacher salary increases. That school boards have not demonstrated strong commitment to their observance, may partly be attributable to the diffidence of the terms within which these guidelines are couched. For example, in 1973 ASTA Economic Services announced its projections in terms of three possible scenarios but refrained from declaring its choice in terms of that which was most feasible, Meanwhile, commitment on the part of those members of Economic Council who debated the staff suggestions remained suspect in the perception of at least one observer. He remarked, "They argued here all day and they eventually agreed on what they would do. But I'll bet that when they get back out there, they'll each go their own sweet way!" (Field Notes: October 4, 1973) Unbeknown to the respondant, at that time at least two jurisdictions were in process of completing agreements which allowed teachers salary increases beyond that considered prudent by Economic Council in the meeting of which he spoke. Within two months another settlement by a SAA at a similar level rendered any further pretence at observance of ASTA guidelines, entirely futile.

A second illustration is provided by the ASTA's role in the debate during the early months of 1974, surrounding the question of whether teachers working under two-year term agreements should be allowed cost of living bonuses. As early as November of 1973 the Association had learned of the Edmonton Public School Board's interest in making such an allowance for its staff. Meanwhile, the Calgary Board of Education was known to oppose such a gesture. In conjunction with the administration component of each Metro Board, the ASTA sponsored a joint meeting of trustees to discuss the matter. These representative of the Metro Boards conferred with ASTA officials in Calgary on January 30, 1974. Although attended by the ASTA Executive Director and Director of Economic Services who expressed staff opposition to 'reopening' existing contracts, the meeting was clearly dominated by trustee representatives of each Metro Board. The outcomes of this meeting was inconclusive with each jurisdication agreeing to keep its counterparts informed on developments. On the day following however, largely at the urging of the ASTA president (also chairman of a Metro Board) ASTA Economic Council forwarded to the Executive a recommendation that the practice of 'reopening' be avoided. On February 8 in ASTA Economic Services Bulletin, news of this recommendation was circulated to member boards. ASTA Executive Council endorsed Economic Council's position at its February 25 meeting. Immediately thereafter, the ASTA president notified the Minister of Manpower and Labour by mail that the ASTA formally opposed 'reopening' of collective agreements. The March 8, 1974 Economic Services Bulletin reiterated the Association's position, and criticized the provincial government over its March 1st agreement with the Civil Service Association of Alberta on salary adjustments for public servants in its employ.

The impact of the government's initiative was soon felt with the eventual weakening of school boards' resolve to remain unmoved. On March 26, several hours prior to its regular monthly meeting, the Edmonton Public School Board advised the ASTA and the Edmonton Separate School Board that one agenda item involved consideration of its conference committee's recommendation that teachers be granted an unscheduled increase. At the meeting from which three of the seven trustees were absent, the school board unanimously endorsed the recommendation that awarded $25 or 2 1/2 per cent increase (whichever being the greater) to non ATA employees and extended a similar offer to the ATA on a 'take it or leave it' basis. No ASTA officials were in attendance. The minutes of the Economic Council meeting held two days later on March 28, 1974 contained the following summary of reaction.

> In view of recent action by some school boards to offer cost of living adjustments the Economic Council restated the following position adopted at the January 31st, 1974 meeting:
>
> That the Executive of the ASTA urge all member boards to decline requests from representatives of ATA locals to open negotiations on any or all parts of collective agreements in effect for the calendar year 1974.
>
> Members of the Economic Council voiced concern that salary adjustments to previously negotiated collective agreements will place undue pressure on other school jurisdictions for similar increases.

By comparison with the hostility and sense of betrayal which greeted the Edmonton school boards' decisions to "reopen" collective agreements, this formal ASTA reaction reveals considerable restraint.[4] For those whose experience with school board collective bargaining extended over more than a year or two however, the eventuality was regarded somewhat more cynically. It constituted but another piece of evidence that school boards are incapable of unified action. Others were more philosophical, pointing out the progress toward concerted action that had been achieved over the longrun, and suggesting that such setbacks must be anticipated (Field Notes: March 28, 1974).

Not all of this apparent inability of school boards to engage in cooperative endeavour to achieve ASTA collective bargaining objectives is attributable to mindless intransigence and self interest. School board trustees and administrators are frequently frankly mistrustful of the Association's recommendations. They appear remote from the collective bargaining realities that must be broached locally. The Edmonton Public School board administration, for example, found the ASTA opposition to reopening unrealistic and unwise in view of its particular relationship with its ATA local. A representative observed, "My biggest regret is that we didn't do this (reopen) back in November when we first talked about it. Probably, we could have 'bought' something like a two-year agreement, with it then" (Field Notes: May 17, 1974). Illustrative of similar skepticism with respect to the wisdom of ASTA advice, is that entertained by rural trustees in particular over the Association's fruitless campaign to have principals negotiated out of bargaining units. As one county administrator remarked,

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[4] Edmonton Separate School Board extended the same offer to its employees but Calgary Board of Education and Battle River SAA desisted.

> We like the principals in the bargaining unit. They are assertive and they know what they are doing. The teachers will listen to them. We can talk to the principals, but some of the others who come to the table, you just can't deal with. They don't know how it works.
>
> Also, we don't 'buy' this 'hold the line' on teacher salaries that the ASTA has been telling us to do. It doesn't make any sense to offer the teachers nothing, or something like 3 per cent. A first offer should be reasonable, around 7 per cent or so. (Field Notes: May 16, 1974) (Paraphrased)

Ultimately, moreover, the ASTA cannot aspire to total implementation of a coordinated collective bargaining program for school boards. Such an eventuality would be counterproductive to the extent that the Association would risk the accusation that it seeks to undermine membership autonomy and force provincial-level bargaining upon school teachers (a proposition to which the latter have been intractable in the past).

3. Policy and Issue Analysis

In spite of their insistence that the principle of 'management's right to organize the factors of production' should preclude employee intervention, school boards have been confronted with many teacher demands that threaten to expand the scope of collective agreements to an unprecedented extent. Reflecting this phenomenon, the ASTA Economic Services Director observes (1973:4):

> A much greater role in terms of policy issues and analysis devolves upon ASTA in collective bargaining in the future. Assuming that the group process will continue and that no major substantive changes will occur in the collective bargaining process, then the focus of attention should be on substantive issues and demands. As these become more complex they require more attention and a different kind of attention than occurred in past years.
>
> ASTA staff should always be free to concentrate on the analysis of teacher demands. Again, this is a role which ASTA should be primarily responsible for although it is a role which outside bargaining consultants can fulfill to some extent and which school board administrators should also be able to fulfill to some extent. (Departmental Discussion Paper)

In addition to its endorsement of regional bargaining, removal of principals from the bargaining unit, and the 'sanctity' of existing agreements in the face of pressure for 'reopening', the ASTA Economic Services department periodically urges school boards to adopt particular strategies or to countenance certain innovations. For example, they are counselled against entertaining teacher demands that impinge upon existing benefits enjoyed under The School Act. Such matters as the right to employ teachers under temporary contracts, salary payment procedures, and definition of the school day etc., are considered by the ASTA to fall within this domain. Advice on how to deal with issues arising out of bargaining table discussion is incorporated in the annually circulated collective bargaining manual. Among items considered worthy of attention in 1973 and 1974, sick leave, maternity leave, method of fringe benefit and administrative allowance payments, as well as teacher demands for dental group plans, featured prominently. With respect to policy involving strategy, the Economic Services department emphasized the wisdom of avoiding conciliation. The 1973 revision of The Alberta Labour Act created uncertainties with respect to conciliation outcomes. Moreover, ASTA staff recalled instances in which Conciliation had forced automatic escalation in school boards' concessions. A second suggestion involved insistence upon retroactivity as comprising a negotiable item. Traditionally, teacher salaries have received salary retroactive to expiry of a previous agreement. During 1973, a settlement in one SAA denied retroactivity to one category of employee. This prompted the ASTA to advise school boards to raise retroactivity as a bargaining item at least, perhaps in the hope that teachers would be more readily coerced into seeking relatively early settlements.

Periodically, ASTA staff officers bring innovative measures to the attention of trustees. These supplement the pleas for more enlightened approaches to management contained in articles that they publish in the Association's quarterly magazine. Typically however, these notions have not enjoyed enthusiastic acceptance. The fate of their suggestion for altering the traditional salary grid structure exemplifies the situation. Throughout 1973, ASTA Economic Services had been developing the idea of replacing the existing provision for six years of professional training in the salary grid structure. Instead, two components namely, degree and non-degree status, were suggested. The concept was incorporated within a collective bargaining role play scheduled at the 1973 ASTA Labour Relations Seminar. In almost all outcomes of the exercise, the two-step concept had been eliminated. Comment, particularly by those trustees noted for their experience in collective bargaining, was adverse. Henceforth the concept was not actively promoted and the two-step grid did not appear in subsequent agreements between school boards and teachers. At the regional bargaining level, a similar fate befell an ASTA staff officer suggestion that teachers be offered 'split' grids during the course of bargaining. This concept involved agreement on a specified grid for part of the contract period with provision for formula adjustments applicable for the balance. Trustee indifference to this, and other innovative suggestions concerning sick and maternity leave proposals, as well as new formulas for fringe benefit payments, induced one ASTA officer to resolve that his future caucus input would be confined to reaction against the teachers' demands.

4. Direct Service to Client Boards

This service may assume either of two forms. In the first place, a member board may request the services of an ASTA staff officer to act in the capacity of bargaining table spokesman. On the other hand, the officer may be required to perform consultative services without actually engaging in bargaining as a spokesman for the board. In both cases, separation of the 'actor' and 'agency' functions is fraught with complexities. Consequently, much that is considered in this section overlaps with that outlined in a later chapter devoted to the activities of the actors in the collective bargaining spectacle.

In view of the large number of school jurisdictions to be serviced, the limited resources available to the Economic Services department, and furthermore, constraints arising from a relatively high rate of staff replacement, the ASTA can realistically countenance only a relatively modest participation in bargaining table activity. Nevertheless, as is noted by Economic Services' Director (1973:4), some minimal level is crucial to maintenance of the Association's credibility.

> It is essential that the personnel be involved in direct bargainings in order to maintain contact with and respect of the Department of Labour. Second, staff must maintain credibility with school boards who are involved and who must be coordinated. There cannot be credibility unless staff coordinators are familiar with the process. (Departmental Discussion Paper)

However, conditions underlying appointment of ASTA staff officers as bargaining table spokesmen are also crucial in determining the degree to which the image of the Association may be enhanced by their intervention.

Generally speaking, the circumstances under which an ASTA staff officer is appointed as spokesman for a school jurisdiction frequently are such as to militate against the Association achieving widespread recognition as an effective, astute bargaining organization. In the first place, the locales in which ASTA services are requested are not only in many cases remote from the major provincial centres, but they involve relatively small numbers of teachers. In other words, apart from local appreciation, the dividends in terms of esteem and credibility are relatively small when measured against time and effort invested by the staff officer. Meanwhile, the fact that for the most part, the major urban school boards and many SAAs bypass ASTA spokesmen in favour of their own personnel or hired consultants, reflects poorly on their esteem.[5]

Secondly, commonly many small school boards follow contract directions completed in larger and more visible jurisdictions. Confronted frequently with this environment, the ASTA staff officer is deprived of the opportunity to display the full extent of his bargaining skill. In most cases, to depart from the 'provincial pattern' is to court the risk of sharp reaction from the ATA, without being assured of substantive support from trustees who see no reason to be 'leaders' in collective bargaining.

Thirdly, the ASTA staff officer may be called in to act on behalf of a school board only after bargaining with teachers has proceeded for some time. In such instances, the work of the new spokesman frequently becomes that of a "salvage" operation. Where the board in question has yielded unwise concessions or enunciated unwise commitments, the staff officer is forced to combat adversity that will unlikely be fully acknowledged by his principals regardless of the contract outcome.[6] On the other hand, the risk to the officer and the ASTA of "scapegoating" in this situation is an everpresent danger, where the contract proves to be costly and/or unpopular.

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[5] These jurisdictions may justify their actions on grounds other than those which would allege incompetence on the part of ASTA officers. For example, ASTA resources for this type of service are admittedly meagre, and the Metro Boards in particular, are well-endowed with personnel and the administrative wherewithall for bargaining. Additionally, talented trustee negotiators are available in some jurisdictions. The point at issue is however, that in failing to acquire 'high profile' assignments, ASTA officers are effectively thwarted in endeavours to enhance credibility.

[6] Politically, a school board would be reluctant to publicly acknowledge the full extent of initial adversity that an ASTA officer encountered at a particular bargaining site, because of that which such an admission would imply with regard to the board's own ineptness at the bargaining table. 'Face Saving' etiquette prevents the officer from claiming full credit.

These three factors' cumulative effect, along with trustee reticence at surrendering 'local autonomy', is such as to militate against ASTA efforts to secure high profile bargaining table assignments. This, in turn, diminishes its staff officers' capacity to assert the type of bargaining table authoritative presence which Schelling (1969: 337-340) describes as prerequisite to effective negotiation. Moreover, it poses problems for the Association in the event that it should seek to take initiatives to acquire legal status as a bargaining agent for school boards. Even in the event that perceived ambiguity in existing statute is clarified in the ASTA's favour, it must still rely upon individual school board confidence in its collective bargaining expertise in order to secure official bargaining agent recognition.

The ASTA consultant role (that of data collection, counselling committee members, lobbying with provincial government officials, as well as providing informal avenues of communication with ATA counterparts) is relatively unspectacular and, in many cases onerous. These facilitative tasks, by their very nature, are not calculated to impress the average school trustee whose knowledge of the collective bargaining process may be marginal. Nor do they deflect to the ASTA personnel the credit which instead, devolves upon trustees and outside consultants whose role as spokesmen and committee chairmen render them highly visible to school board members and to the public generally.

During 1973 and 1974 the capacity of the ASTA to extend collective bargaining service to school boards was further taxed by heightened activity on the part of the Canadian Union of Public Employees in organizing the non-teaching personnel employed by rural school boards in particular. Once more, the work involved proved burdensome and unspectacular. Because collective bargaining with non professional staff is a relatively new phenomena for many school trustees, the nature and extent of the problems encountered and overcome in forging settlements where no precedents exist, are matters easily overlooked by all but the few intimately involved. Where, as was the case for the staff officer assigned these duties in 1973-74, most of the work involves 'behind the scenes' initiative, neither the individual nor the Association could hope to benefit greatly in terms of enhanced credibility. Meanwhile, attention to potentially more visible teacher bargaining, was sacrificed.[7]

5. Preparing Trustees and Administrators for Collective Bargaining Responsibilities

Two major functions, one general and the other specific, underly this facet of the ASTA Economic Services department's activity. In the first instance its concern focuses upon familiarization of school board personnel with the basics upon which collective bargaining with teachers are predicated. Secondly, there exists a need to locate and train individuals capable of shouldering bargaining table responsibility on behalf of their respective school boards.

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[7] These observations apply to the period prior to the C.U.P.E. locals' stoppages which closed schools in Calgary in 1975, thus focusing considerable public attention on the crucial importance of negotiations with non-teaching employees.

As early as 1964, during its formative stage, ASTA Economic Services organized a workshop designed to achieve the latter objective. However, in response to complaints that the selection criteria were too narrow, the scope and participation in subsequent exercises was broadened. In so doing however, Economic Services was forced to shift its emphasis from the training of spokesmen to one involving general education. Periodically, in order to upgrade the skills of those willing to lead negotiations with teachers, participation in seminars conducted at centres outside the province has been sponsored.

The task entailed in raising trustee and administration collective bargaining skill faces major difficulties. In the first place, the ASTA's Administration and Labour Relations seminars can only aspire to conveying a bare minimum of understanding to a large number of people. Secondly, the volatile nature of collective bargaining is such as to render association with it something that is personally and/or politically distasteful to many who hold professional or elective office. Thirdly, the time required for mastery of the collective bargaining niceties, as well as that consumed when engaging in the process itself, is frequently far in excess of that which school board personnel can afford to expend. Furthermore, the high rate of attrition associated with the elective nature of the school trustee's office, creates the situation in which the process of training must almost continually be renewed. Moreover, many trustees and administrators do not place a high priority on the need to increase the general level of collective bargaining expertise within their ranks. Some express this viewpoint because they are genuinely disinterested. Others place a premium on a need for confidentiality and prefer to limit the participation of colleagues in collective bargaining.

The ASTA has not clearly formulated its collective bargaining education objectives. The effectiveness of workshops and seminars remains obscure. Meanwhile, ambiguity is compounded by those circumstances elaborated in the previous section concerning the lack of enthusiasm displayed towards ASTA officers as bargaining table spokesmen. These circumstances conspire to prevent acquisition of benefits that might be anticipated to accrue from formation of a skilled, knowledgeable and permanent cadre of negotiators.

SUMMARY

The theatrical analogy has been extended in this chapter to include a second participant category. This category includes such organizations as the ASTA and the ATA, both of which engage in activity calculated to enhance clientele welfare. On the one hand, each association interacts with its membership for the purpose of improving the latter's collective bargaining performance. On the other, both Associations interact with the government for the purpose of furthering the collective bargaining interests of their respective memberships.

Within the context of the dramatic analogy therefore, each Association performs a role resembling that of theatrical agent. Their responsibility for the spectacle's effectiveness derives from their success or otherwise in serving their clients' (the actors') interests by developing their talent, while simultaneously pressing backstage participants for circumstances favourable to convincing onstage performance. This study focuses on the ASTA's theatrical agency role, and in this chapter, the agent-actor facet of the role has been explored.

Although the history of the ASTA as the organization representing the school board interests against threats mounted by the ATA spans more than half a century, only in recent years has it mobilized sufficient resources to seriously mount collective bargaining initiatives. Commencing in 1965, the Association has included in its reorganization plans a structure designed to enhance its leadership role in the collective bargaining field. An Economic Services department employing permanent staff officers and an Economic Council are its two major vehicles.

The Economic Services department of the ASTA has focused its efforts in five general areas involving school board collective bargaining performance. These areas are communication, coordination, policy formulation, direct service, and trustee education. Success in each of these endeavours has been mixed. Within the context of a long run perspective extending back over two decades, noteworthy achievement is observable. The ASTA is instrumental in providing onstage participants with information on a broad range of statistical, strategic and policy matters calculated to provide a repertoire of responses hitherto lacking in the face of teacher bargaining table demands. It has also contributed to formation of coalitions at the regional level that have enjoyed a measure of success in combatting 'whipsaw' salary bargaining strategies, and in one work stoppage at least, demonstrated considerable school board resilience in the face of coercion.

In the short run however, progress has been less spectacular. The ASTA has been unequal to the task of formulating collective bargaining objectives that win the support of school boards on a province-wide basis.

Furthermore, it remains incapable of eliciting unified school board action either with respect to collective bargaining initiatives, or in response to ATA challenges. School trustees are suspicious of its designs upon what they consider local prerogatives. Moreover, they mistrust the wisdom of many bargaining recommendations which, though perhaps rational within a province-wide perspective on collective bargaining, are not geared to compatibility with negotiation 'realities' locally perceived. The Association, in effect, must combat a crisis of confidence if it hopes to achieve its collective bargaining objectives in the five areas designated.

The situation in which it finds itself is not static however. Sagging credibility generates a downward spiral in its capacity to fulfill its purposes. Without easy access to strategic information on school board collective bargaining plans (particularly on plans made in the large jurisdictions), the Association's power base is eroded. Moreover, because its officers rarely receive prestigious bargaining assignments and are more likely to receive public criticism for mistakes rather than general praise for bargaining table accomplishments, the credibility gap widens.

To reverse a process that continues and repeats itself with lowered staff morale, resignations, and further loss of valuable information as well as grass-roots contacts with particular school boards, no simple remedy will suffice. At the heart of the matter are questions of power and control of the ASTA itself. This conflict situation is explainable in the context of the next chapter's subject matter--the Association's theatrical agent interaction with backstage participants on behalf of onstage participants.

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CHAPTER VI

STAGING A THEATRICAL PRODUCTION

III. ONE THEATRICAL AGENT AND THE THEATRICAL COMPANY

1. The Theatrical Agent's Interaction with Backstage Participants

David Truman's (1953:502) explanation of the role of political interest groups in the American political process resembles that which the ASTA seeks to pursue on behalf of its membership. Truman asserts:

> . . . the behaviors that constitute the process of government cannot be adequately understood apart from the groups, especially the organized and potential interest groups, which are operative at any point in time.
>
> Collections of individuals interacting on the basis of shared attitudes and exerting claims upon other groups in the society usually find in the institutions of government an important means of achieving their objectives.

In the education sector, the ASTA finds itself pitted against other political interest groups, the most formidable of which is the ATA.[1] Where their focus of concern is legislation, the legislature becomes the arbiter of the struggle of competing wills. Lathom (1952:30) has enuciated a general conceptualization of the process which ensues.

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[1] Political interest group activity by the ASTA and the ATA is extensively documented in doctoral research by Bailey (1956), Kratzman (1963), Odynak (1963), Roberts (1966), Selinger (1967), Angus (1968) Johnson (1971), and Stringham (1974).

> The legislature referees the group struggle, ratifies the victories of the successful coalitions, and records the terms of the surrenders, compromises, and conquests in the form of statutes. Every statute tends to represent compromise because the very process of accommodating conflicts of group interest is one of deliberation and consent.

That the course of events surrounding enactment and administration of education related statute in Alberta constitutes no radical departure from Lathom's general scheme, is evidenced by Uhyrn's (1972:92) appraisal.

> By virtue of its success orientation, the Social Credit Party's approach to politics during election time and during its stay in office, appears to be one of brokerism and pragmatism.

Specific accounts of instances where officials of the Alberta Department of Education engaged in this type of activity for the purpose of mollifying ASTA and ATA objections are provided in Stringham's (1974) description of deliberations underlying revision of The School Act. With respect to the politicians' and civil servants' common orientation he (1974:160) notes:

> It would seem that the Act which emerged was judged to be politically expedient. It can be assumed that the drafters of the Act together with the Legislature that passed it acted as a pragmatic man in that they did not search for the one best way but tended to grasp quickly for the way that would work.

Notwithstanding Stringham's claims which are based on data secured from a legislative commission vantage point, the current study which draws its evidence from the education collective bargaining setting suggests that government decisions do not merely reflect a balance of political interest group pressure. As is argued in the section devoted to the directorship, and in that which focuses on game interaction, the provincial government relies for some of its capacity to exercise power upon the neutralizing effect which ASTA and ATA influencing initiatives incur upon each other.

The ASTA engages in a wide range of lobbying activity with provincial-level agencies. The Association Executive receives direction through resolutions that school trustees endorse in Annual Convention. Convention resolutions are presented to the Minister of Education and a Cabinet education committee. Other submissions are made formally throughout the year with respect to emergent issues. In addition, day-by-day vigilance that entails contact with many decision points in the provincial civil service and with other organizations is necessitated in order that the school board interests be consistently safeguarded.

Legislative outcomes, ministerial decisions, civil service administrative rulings, and ATA political manoeuvering, manifest a special immediacy for ASTA staff and school trustees whose primary interest focuses on collective bargaining. Two basic arenas of concern involve a quasi bi-level bargaining dynamic on the one hand, and the related phenomenon involving Ministerial discretion with respect to school funding regulations.

A quasi bi-level bargaining situation arises to the extent that the government has chosen to enshrine within statute certain items pertaining to teacher terms and conditions of employment. Elsewhere, the equivalent items are subject to negotiation between labour and management at the bargaining table. In other words, in the private sector particularly, the scope of the collective agreement is not circumscribed by the existence of subsidiary legislation. In education however, the situation arises where either the teachers or the school boards may seek resolution of certain issues on either of two fronts. If, for example, the former are unsuccessful in securing provincial government action to curb perceived abuses by school boards in the use of temporary contracts of employment, they may apply pressure to have safeguards written into collective agreements. On the other hand, should school boards stolidly resist incorporation of pupil-teacher ratio clauses within collective agreements, pressure may be mounted at the provincial level to realize this objective either by fiat or through some adjustment in school finance formulas. Similar strategies remain at the school boards' disposal should they elect to pursue the objective of having particular employee categories declared "out of scope" of teacher collective agreements. Both the ASTA and the ATA demonstrate facility in orchestrating the emphasis which they employ at each level with respect to any given issue in dispute. Furthermore they are not loathe to buttress an argument for preservation of the status quo by reference to the potentially hazardous implications which projected action at one level threatens for the other level. For example, on March 19, 1974 the ATA President sought to dissuade the government from proceeding with certain changes contained within The School Act Ammendment Act, 1974. "The situation is serious," he warned, "If these minimum guarantees are done away with, and must be thrashed out at the bargaining table, we may be looking at strikes all over the province." (The ATA News--emphasis added).

Ministerial and civil service decision making with respect to the conciliation process does not operate in isolation from pressure mounted by the ASTA and the ATA. At the highest level, both interest groups mount considerable pressure when questions arise concerning, for instance, appointment of conciliators, or the dispute settlement route which the Minister of Manpower and Labour might designate as appropriate to resolution of a particular impasse. In strike situations, or impending strike situations, activity at this level becomes extreme. At a less august but nevertheless crucial level, ASTA and ATA staff officers must continually monitor the operations of personnel employed in the Board of Industrial Relations. From within this group most conciliator and conciliation board chariman appointments are forthcoming. Frequently, the outcome of their deliberations may hinge upon the effectiveness with which staff officers present the teachers' or school boards' arguments outside, as well as within, formal hearings conducted by these officials. Finally, an ideal which further justifies cultivation of close ties with the civil service personnel, is the opportunity for acquisition of advanced notice of impending decisions and policy changes.

These formal and informal avenues of communication are forged in a variety of ways and arise from a variety of circumstances. Provision for formal consultation facilitates submission of Association briefs which comprise consolidation of resolutions endorsed at ASTA Annual Convention, or the distillation of policy in so far as it is pertinent to impending legislation. Government ministers also accept the principle of periodic consultation with ASTA officials. In November of 1973 for example, The ASTA Economic Council was deliberating over the rate of annual increase in school funding which it should request from the provincial government. The Executive Director was able to interject, "That has already been taken to the Minister. The president and I met with him, and he seemed quite amenable to any figure suggested in that particular range!" (Field Notes, paraphrased: November 29). In some instances this type of consultation includes joint meetings. For example, the ministers responsible for the Education and Labour portfolios met with ASTA and ATA officials in February, 1974 to apprise the respective associations of the government's predisposition toward granting cost-of-living adjustments for employees in industry and government (Executive Council minutes: February 23, 1974).

'Off the record' exchange of views between ASTA officials on the one hand, and provincial government and ATA officials on the other, supplements formal communication. Opportunity for this type of interaction occurs at the many seminars and conferences sponsored annually, and at which attendance by representatives of each organization is almost standard procedure. Additionally, operation of the Alberta education enterprise has spawned numerous joint committees. Participation in the work of these committees yields a type of non-prejudicial venue for discussion of delicate collective bargaining issues. For example, at one particular meeting shortly after a breakdown in negotiations, a senior government official was able to privately explain the type of displeasure that a recalcitrant school board might expect from the Minister of Education. The message was relayed by the ASTA Economic Services officer to his principals at the school board (Field Notes: February 5, 1974).

Committee work also provides a channel for communication between ASTA and ATA spokesmen at a distance from the careful scrutiny of their respective negotiation committees. Social encounters, luncheons, and telephone conversations, are utilized extensively in the quest for information and influence. The parties also make extensive use of the mails and the media. Regardless of prior verbal exchanges on specific issues, ASTA staff officers feel compelled to draft written comment where ever the Association's collective bargaining interests are seen to be threatened by ATA or government action. The written memo is perceived as a vehicle for forestalling an ATA thrust, as a means for advancing an ASTA interest, as a hedge against anticipated criticism, and as a vehicle for reminding the membership that central office is alert, if not effective. Essentially, written response to the government or "the ATA boys" is perceived by ASTA staff officers as "a matter of principle."

2. Organizational Dimensions of the Theatrical Agent's Role

An early assessment of his department's effectiveness in forging contacts which ostensibly provide the Association with its due measure of provincial government benificence, is contained in this excerpt from the ASTA Economic Services Director's report (1970:5).

> Since 1965, Economic Services has cultivated the officials of the Department of Labour very assiduously. Almost all correspondence originating with the Department of Labour concerning a labour dispute and school board is routinely sent to ASTA. Telephone communications are very frequent. As well, it has been the practice for the Economic Services Department to invite the appropriate officials of the Department of Labour to lunch at least four, and sometimes more, times per year when the general development and practices are reviewed and criticisms and suggestions are freely exchanged. There are of course many more luncheon meetings when specific issues are pressing.

Of recent years, this tempo of political activity by the department has slackened. Several contributing factors are apparent. The first can be linked to the relatively high rate of staff turnover within the Economic Services department.

In September of 1973 the department consisted of only two officers and had replaced its director who had resigned after less than three years in that position. Two of the three officers who resigned during 1973 had been also employed with the ASTA for relatively brief periods. Therefore, during 1973 and 1974, Economic Services' resources were diverted from influence activity to staff training. The situation repeated itself in the following year when two experienced staff officers resigned from the Economic Services department.

A second factor which has undermined ASTA Economic Services' effectiveness in exercising influence with government authorities originates within the Association's governing structure, and is not entirely unrelated to its staff retention difficulties. The problem is one of internal conflict that has developed around a need to find solutions to several general questions. In the first place, the ASTA operational structure is such that two groups, the elected office bearers and the salaried staff officers, find themselves in disagreement over the functions that each might properly be expected to exercise. In the field of collective bargaining and labour relations there exist conflicting expectations between the groups as to the most appropriate distribution of responsibility for discretionary action. The Economic Services' personnel feel constrained in the extent to which they may lobby with politicians, express Association viewpoints, and generally make decisions, free of what they consider arbitrary censure by members of Executive Council in particular. The risk of censure is further heightened by a second series of questions that continues to escape resolution within the Association namely, those pertaining to the most appropriate type of political influence activity in which the ASTA should engage.

Political Accountability versus Administrative Discretion: A Major Source of Conflict Within the ASTA

Conceptually, the individual possesses a capacity to conjure an almost limitless number of personal goals, many of which are transported into the organization where employment occurs. In the organizational setting where these goals become interspersed with group goals, conflict becomes virtually inevitable as individuals and groups discover that not all of these separately held objectives are compatible. A growing body of literature supports the contention that conflict is intrinsic to organizational life, but nevertheless, far from constituting a pathological condition, it may yield much that is positive (Coser 1956 and 1967). One central source of conflict in organizations arises from the relationship between those charged with the responsibility of directing its affairs on the one hand, and those engaged in its day by day operation. With respect to the control motivation of the former, Peter Self (1972:153) observes:

> Politicians are the ultimate controllers of the administrative systems, and one of their chief problems is to maintain and demonstrate the reality of their control.
>
> Control in this sense does not mean simply (or primarily) making sure that policies that have been made are faithfully executed. It also has the converse meaning of so holding the reins of office that the decisions of administrators can always (if necessary) be over-ruled or ammended. It means also establishing an atmosphere in which administrators will continually be aware of political guidelines and constraints.

This represents a control problem relevant in many organizational settings, and not solely within the ASTA. However, the problem is considerably magnified within the latter for several reasons. The first concerns the nature of the activity in which the ASTA is engaged. The second stems from the unique styles and actions manifested by each group comprising the Association's upper echelon namely, the Executive and the Service Branches.

As was previously outlined, the environment in which school boards and teachers conduct collective bargaining is highly political. Moreover the nature and pace of the bargaining process also places special demands upon those participants striving to achieve favourable outcomes. The pace of activity is uneven. For protracted periods very little seems to eventuate. These lulls are punctuated by series of events transpiring in rapid succession. While participant activity during the latter appears frenetic by comparison with that observable in the former, in order to maintain bargaining power, constant vigilance is requisite regardless of current negotiating developments. In addition to the capacity to maintain vigilence and to keep abreast of developments, participants must also be capable of responding with resolve and despatch to emergent situations. This may imply possession of authority to accept a compromise in order to resolve an impasse, or it may suggest the participant's right to argue a point on behalf of a principal at the highest level in the provincial government.

Defined according to the ASTA's formal organization chart, the Executive branch consists of seventeen school trustees and two staff officers (the Executive Director and Secretary-Treasurer) sitting in Council. Conflict between members of the Executive Council and individual staff officers is more apparent in the collective bargaining operational context, than it is between the two branches of the Association considered as entities. The Executive Council as a group rarely becomes embroiled in collective bargaining matters, although it may endorse particular motions prepared by individual members, or brought by individual members from Economic Council, whose interests focus more intensively in the area of labour relations.

Collective bargaining initiatives by members of Economic Council acting either independently or as members of a Council sub-group fit two broad categories. In both instances, these initiatives almost inevitably impinge upon a domain in which ASTA Economic Services operates. Consequently, the situation exists, regardless of the type of initiative, where conflict between the two Association branches is latent.

The first type of initiative focuses upon a specific bargaining related concern. As explained by one staff officer, this arises where a trustee has "'an axe to grind' or a 'personal cause' and brings it to Economic Council. The policy of the Council therefore merely represents an opinion of that particular individual who then goes away" (Field Notes: March 15, 1974). For instance, during the early months of 1974, Economic Council witnessed strenuous efforts by a particular executive member to promote a motion that would have the ASTA publicly oppose reopening of collective agreements. This individual's school board faced, at the time considerable pressure from its ATA local to modify its two-year agreement. The second type of initiative involves continuous participation in collective bargaining events, whether they involve actual teacher-board negotiations or lobbying with the provincial government and generally contesting with the ATA. Generally speaking, the style and action-form typical of Executive Council may perhaps be best described in Peter Self's (1972:161) terminology applicable to political attitudes that "reflect at the root the wish of politicians to keep control without knowing how or whether they propose to exercise their power."

Much that has already been described with respect to Economic Services is indicative of its style and action-form. Reference has been made to the department's limited resources when considered in relation to the number of its potential clients. Its difficulties with regard to establishment of credibility have been explained in terms of the type and nature of its officers' assignments. A high rate of attrition within their ranks has been suggested as a further factor undermining the department's effectiveness. The remainder of this section will be devoted to consideration of interaction between Economic Services and members of the Executive as each operate to fulfill their respective collective bargaining objectives.

Formal and Non Formal Control of the ASTA

In his study of the ATA, Odynak (1963) differentiated between two types of control exercised over the Association's affairs. Each form was discerned as a function performed by two distinct groups in its hierarchy. At the formal level, according to Odynak, teachers who are elected to office on ATA Provincial Executive Council wield power. At the crucial non formal level, the salaried staff officers employed at the ATA provincial headquarters are perceived as being paramount. Odynak (1963:228) elaborates on the relative significance of the two forms.

> In the last analysis formal control of the Association (the ATA) is in the hands of the Executive Council, but in day to day business of the Association and in retrospect of the major issues studied, non formal control overrides formal control.

In Odynak's opinion, this state of affairs is not entirely unexpected, nor is it necessarily detrimental to the ATA's success as a political interest group. In the first place, he points out that the elected members of ATA Provincial Executive Council must simultaneously devote considerable time and effort to client welfare namely, that of students. Furthermore, he recognizes that the political interest group activity to which the ATA is committed requires continuing vigilance and capacity for instant initiative that can be provided only by a full time staff. Secondly, his review of the extraordinary success that the ATA has enjoyed in achieving its original objectives, is in large part attributable to this particular organizational form.

The ASTA, on the other hand, presents a different situation insofar as location of formal and non formal control is observable. Trustee remarks are studded with sombre reference to the apparent success which administrators have achieved in subverting the elected official's control, not only of school boards but, of the ASTA as well. For example, they complain, "The trouble is we leave too much to the administration!" or, "The administrators are running the show and the trustees don't know what their job is!" The President, on one occasion, alleged that Economic Services comprises a group of "cloak and dagger boys" apparently beyond purview of ASTA Executive Council (Field Notes: January 30, 1974). These sinister allusions notwithstanding, scrutiny of interaction between elected office bearers in the ASTA and the Association's salaried officers indicates that the former hold sway both with respect to formal and non formal control of the organization.

The Nature of ASTA Executive Ascendancy

Whereas each school trustee shares opportunity for deliberation on their Association's general purposes and activities by attending the ASTA Annual Convention, formal control of business is exercised by Executive Council in each of its six or more meetings conducted throughout the year. For each of these sessions, a voluminious and painstakingly prepared agenda documents developments across the broad spectrum of the Association's affairs. A score of items usually require some type of endorsement by Council members. Elected officers also engage in extensive commitment to participation in the Association's many committees, councils and task forces. The Table Officers feature prominently in any dealings that the ASTA attempts with provincial government authorities and other organizations that play leading roles in education. Not only do most documents and submissions carry the signatures of these influentials, but they usually reserve unto themselves the right to engage in top level negotiation and consultation, as well as to issue authoritative pronouncements in the media.[2]

Equally as any statistical compilation of the superior role assumed by individuals or powerful cliques within the ASTA Executive, is the tenor of interaction between that segment and the Association's salaried officers. At best, it reflects a spirit of condescension on the part of the elected officials toward the latter, and at worst, their exchanges reflect that which is tantamount to a 'hired hand' syndrome. Deliberations underlying decisions that govern the ASTA's internal operations, as well as those which bear upon its manoeuvering in relation to other organizations, remain substantially the preserve of trustees in the Executive. Meanwhile, the role of staff officers in this type of decision making is strictly circumscribed and closely monitored. Their relatively unspectacular tasks involving preparation of position papers and collation of statistical reports may be appropriate in the classical bureaucratic setting. However, this definition fails to take account of exigencies inherent in the education collective bargaining environment, to which reference has already been made as demanding initiative and flexibility on the part of participants.

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[2] Only rarely do members of the Service Branch usurp Executive paramountcy. One notable exception arose with the ASTA submission to the government on revisions to The Alberta Labour Act. In this instance, expediency dictated that an Economic Services officer feature more prominently than might otherwise be anticipated. Nevertheless, elected officer signatures were the only ones appended and the submission was 'tailored' to accommodate certain Executive officer predispositions (Field Notes: October 5, 1973).

The following excerpt from the ASTA policy guidelines for staff officers exemplifies the constraint which these individuals suffer when calculating collective bargaining strategy. Formally, these restrictions are warranted as a means of safeguarding local school board autonomy.

> Where ASTA staff officers are involved they are expected to encourage and urge the authority to delegate the responsibility for publicity regarding negotiations to an elected official. In so doing the Staff Officer should advise that all ASTA supportative services are available on a consultative basis.
>
> (ASTA Staff Officers) . . . are expected to assist in every way possible with the publicity program regarding negotiations in a manner that will enhance the status of the respective school authority.
>
> . . . it is expected that Staff Officers will endeavor to dissuade and discourage any directives delegating to them prime responsibility for publicity relative to negotiations.

In practice, however, the broad spectrum of interpersonal relations between trustees and ASTA staff officers suggests servility required of the latter by the former. This pressure for deference extends beyond that which particular bargaining exigencies justify. For example, caucus, committee, and council sessions are usually chaired by elected officials. Staff officers supply documentation and record minutes. In addition to unwritten but tacitly understood conventions regarding division of responsibilities at meetings and ASTA-sponsored functions that yield high visibility to elected officials, the nature of participation also differs. The background and functioning of ASTA Economic Council reflects the phenomena in microcosm.

The Economic Council was originally established to function as a task force of experts constituted on an ad hoc basis. After being in operation for less than a decade however, the Council no longer resembles that model. Instead, trustee membership was decided in 1974 on a regional and jurisdictional basis. Its delegates discussed items other than specific collective bargaining type problems and issues. ASTA staff officers attended meetings and presented material for trustee consideration, but their voting rights were curtailed and their overall participation was muted by comparison with that of elected members. More revealing than frequency counts and formal charts of responsibility however, was the tenor of staff-trustee interaction in Economic Council meetings. In contrast to the docility of staff at these meetings, trustees were conspicuous for their veracity. They displayed little compunction in querying staff officers on the accuracy, validity, and/or wisdom of their actions and input (which, during the meetings at least, rarely seemed calculated to intimidate). Between the elected officials themselves moreover, different and more amicable standards of decorum prevailed. Differences, if they existed, must have been held-over for more forthright debate in some less-public venue, and away from staff purview.

For their part, the staff were not without their strategies for operating in this sphere and enjoying a measure of success with respect to safeguarding prerogatives and accomplishing limited objectives. Success in this arena hinged upon the capacity of individuals to gain access to strategic information, valuable also to elected officials. It also entailed a capacity to lobby influential trustees for support on particular causes. Essentially, the capacity to achieve success and to enjoy some degree of permanence with the Association was attributed by staff officers to a capacity for understanding school trustees as "a special breed of 'cat' that doesn't like to be told what to do." In the estimation of a particular officer, longevity with the ASTA is incompatible with any notion of achieving prominence as a consequence of a demonstrated capacity to 'get things done'. "If you want to do anything in this organization," he remarked, "You have to be like _____ ______. He did what he wanted. He made his enemies. And then, he got out!" (Field Notes: January 7, 1974).

Factors Underlying Executive Predominance in ASTA Control

The non formal control of the ATA which Odynak identifies as residing with salaried staff officers is attributable, in his opinion, to certain structural features which delimit the extent of teacher representative participation in the Association's day to day affairs. Structure is also relevant to explanation of control in the ASTA. However, it does not operate to favour the same control balance as exists in the ATA. Neither does it constitute an exhaustive rationale for the observed situation which is one of Executive predominance in both the formal and non formal dimensions of control.

The fundamental structural factor pertains to the time demands that career places upon those individuals who agree to accept appointment to executive office whether it be with the ATA or the ASTA. With regard to the former, Odynak alleges that the rigid daily schedule of classroom or school administrative duties with which district representatives are confronted, precludes extensive involvement by Provincial Executive Council in the Association's routine business. By default therefore, he claims that non formal staff control is enhanced.

The career and occupational demands with which school trustees are burdened however, generally impose less rigid time parameters. Moreover, work demands are less extensive. Those trustees prepared to accept nomination to ASTA Executive Council may, for example, be retired or semi retired. Others are burdened with professional or household duties which, though time consuming, allow discretionary allocation of time for intensive involvement in ASTA affairs, at least periodically. Some Executive members who earn their livelihood in agricultural or pastoral occupations also, during off season periods, are favourably placed to engage in the work of the Association on something approaching a day to day basis. For a few, where occupational and career commitments are so meagre as to facilitate extensive engagement in Association work, monetary considerations and other privileges though not necessarily prime motivators for participation, are ever-present as reinforcement. In other words, whereas teacher involvement in provincial-level affairs effecting their association, structural and situational constraints are less effective in curtailing school trustee participation in routine ASTA activity. Evidence collected in the field research mode suggests that structural factors account only partially for executive preeminance in the ASTA. Considerable scope exists for more exhaustive analysis which focuses on personality and psychological factors.[3]

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[3] The approach followed by James D. Barber in The Presidential Character (1973) is suggestive of the type of research that may prove valuable in defining the part played by personality in shaping the type of activity pursued by the holder of elective office.

Difficulties Blocking Correction of a Self Fulfilling Prophecy

Whatever the initial justification or causes underlying the ASTA Executive's preeminence, a self fulfilling prophecy operates to exacerbate its deleterious effect. Staff officers are regarded with suspicion. Meanwhile, they are criticized for their alleged lack of assertiveness.[4] These inconsistencies create a stressful socialization to the ASTA for new staff officers. Its debilitating effect is magnified because of the high rate of staff replacement. Trustees inducted to ASTA elective office take their cues from existing staff-trustee relationships. Moreover, the inducement exists for individual trustees to further capitalize upon a power situation which already favours the Association's elected branch in such a way as to further undermine the employee socialization process.

The basic recourse for officers in the face of criticism or personal affront is resignation from the ASTA. Rarely does this occur without the individual in question having taken pains to secure alternative employment. Frequently, the true reason for the resignation is overlooked. To the trustee group as a whole, the resignation is attributed to the individual having received a better offer in terms of either money or 'career interest'. Consequently, little pressure is generated for a reexamination of the Association's internal personnel management approaches. The incumbent to a position thus vacated, is placed at a disadvantage in so far as correction of the power imbalance may be concerned. In the first place, being a newcomer, the individual is subject to the normal pressure that reinforces a predisposition to accept the status quo until after orientation at least. Secondly, since the numerous resignations from the ASTA Economic Services department have severed links with the model of aggressive staff presence extant in the late nineteen sixties, the initial socialization process militates against rejuvenation and reinforces servility.

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[4] At the Executive Retreat in January of 1974 for example, Economic Services personnel were urged to adopt more aggressive postures and to assume greater initiative in the ASTA's affairs. The accountability model under which they themselves are allegedly governed, was suggested by trustees as that by which staff officers should also operate (Field Notes: January 7, 1974). Events witnessed in succeeding months did not reveal any departure from a pattern of interaction wherein staff officer status was demeaned.

If the circle or spiral created out of the self fulfilling prophecy is to be broken, a deliberate attempt to foster a change in the perceptions and attitudes of both the elected and the appointed officials must be undertaken. Time is of the essence in order to prevent the situation from further deteriorating and to prevent counterproductive attitudes from becoming further entrenched. Readjustment and reformation of attitudes may have to be broached at the school board level where there is considerable mistrust of the ASTA and where questions arise as to staff officer credibility. These attitudes are illustrated in one trustee's reaction in Economic Council to a suggestion that the ASTA staff administer the school busing program, thereby replacing Department of Education surveillance. "We already have enough people telling us what to do," the trustee remarked in opposition, "We don't need the ASTA on the list. The ASTA is the one organization that the school boards can tell where to get off!" (Field Notes: March 28, 1974). This utterance suggests the operation of a dominance-submission order encompassing the entire field of educational governance. This 'pecking order' constitutes a counterproductive outcome of the imposed order originating 'backstage' and which is elaborated in detailed description of the producer's and the directors' participation.

SUMMARY

The distinction between that which ordinarily falls within the scope of a collective agreement on the one hand, and that which may be governed by provincial statute is blurred, and therefore many matters that are of consequence in local or regional negotiations require attention simultaneously at the provincial level. In addition, the provincial government retains certain decision making prerogatives (most notably in the field of finance and dispute settlement) that bear directly upon the way in which collective bargaining is conducted between the ATA and SAA's or local school boards. The bargaining table participants (onstage performers) find action on their behalf by agents at the provincial level, indespensible to their performance effectiveness.

As is the case when its relationship with school boards is examined from a long run perspective, perusal of the record of ASTA achievements in influencing provincial government decisions reveals some notable successes. For example, in spite of ATA opposition, the regional collective bargaining format has been recognized in statute and has endured. The revised Alberta Labour Act, 1973 reflects the input contained in several ASTA submissions. The Association's right to represent school board opinion to government on educational finance and conciliation-related matters is clearly accepted and anticipated.

In the shortrun however, when advantage demands swift, assertive, and unequivocal force, the ASTA has failed to grasp the initiative. Its voluntary membership and diversity of interest contained therein accounts in part for the ASTA's inability to capitalize on emergent situations in the provincial political sphere. These attributes notwithstanding, ongoing conflict between elected and appointed officials also militates against optimum performance. For their part, the elected officials demonstrate reluctance to yield their perceived decision making prerogatives, and have curtailed staff officer capacity for effective political action. This includes limits on staff involvement in ministerial discussion as well as curbs on its capacity to undertake discretionary action. Scrutiny and criticism over the most routine and trivial activity undermines staff morale, induces diffidence in staff task performance, and contributes to the ASTA's high rate of staff resignations.

The dysfunctionalism for the ASTA stems not so much from the fact that a particular group with decision making power displays a preference for the 'live action' of politics. Both Goffman (1967) and Mintzberg (1974) document this phenomena in other facets of organizational life. The major problem arises because they have failed to construct and articulate an harmonious working relationship with the group that, by the nature of its work, has the time, locale, and resources, to undertake the thought and planning that underlies and is prerequisite to political action. Lacking in the ASTA setting, is evidence of areas in which staff may operate with immunity and be regarded with something more than suspicion for efforts to further the Association's interests.

CHAPTER VII

THE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING SETTING

A Negotiation Environment as Stage, Backdrop, and Props

Insofar as collective bargaining is equatable with theatrical portrayal, school board bargaining unit situations resemble ampitheatres within which trustees and teachers construct performances. Similarly, the general social, political, and economic environment provides a backdrop for collective bargaining performance while comprising a source from which props may be selected. As is the case in the theatre, situational and environmental conditions may constrain collective bargaining performance. Alternatively, depending upon the actors' abilities, these circumstances may be utilized to enhance performance.

That is to say, the solo performer and the theatrical company must overcome difficulties inherent in each performance venue. For example, acoustics, stage appointments, and backstage amenities, warrant special consideration as potential presentation inhibitors. Secondly, the actor applies creative skill in selecting from environmental conditions those which contribute to performance authenticity. Whether by accentuation of particular back-cloth characteristics, or through subtle incorporation of specific props within a performance, an actor may render the audience oblivious to physical conditions that would otherwise undermine credibility.

This chapter outlines situational characteristics and environmental conditions which school boards and teachers confront while negotiating collective agreements in Alberta. Situational characteristics are described under headings which allude to various bargaining unit attributes. These characteristics include organizational differences, demographic size, rural-urban classification, public school-separate school district sponsorship, geographic factors, provincial location, and nature of governance. The chapter's second segment includes a survey of the social, economic, and political environment within which school board collective bargaining was conducted during 1973 and 1974. The survey incorporates items collected outside the purview of education collective bargaining, as well as material derived from school board and teacher sources. In addition, therefore, to specific reference which research subjects made to their environment, the survey incorporates a broad overview of such items as inflation, salary trends, public finance, as well as qualitative assessment pertaining to general social and political phenomena. The general survey's purpose is to provide a basis for insight on the way in which collective bargaining participants construct their performances. It affords grounds for speculation regarding particular participants' emphasis or deemphasis of specific environmental occurences.

Before considering the performers' use of stagery and props however, attention must focus on immediate situations in which they are cast. In terms of the dramaturgic metaphor, this involves examination of Alberta's school board organization as comprising a number of different collective bargaining ampitheatres.

I THE COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AMPITHEATRE

In the province of Alberta, 147 school boards employ approximately 22,000 teachers. During 1973, eighty seven collective agreements were completed between the ATA and these school boards. In the year following, the relevant figure was fifty-six. The 1973 statistics included 108 jurisdictions which endorsed at least one collective agreement with the ATA. In that year moreover, one bargaining unit (comprising 18 school boards) completed a second agreement at the bargaining table. During 1974, 95 school boards completed at least one collective agreement with the ATA. Moreover, 22 of these boards comprised six bargaining units for which records indicate two collective agreements completed with teachers in 1974.[1] These outcomes were forged in a variety of settings, salient characteristics of which are summarized in the following pages.

1. Bargaining Unit Organization

The fundamental distinguishing feature with regard to bargaining unit organization concerns the question of whether school trustees have opted for regional, as distinct from local collective bargaining. Until the late nineteen sixties, school boards had bargained as discrete local entities. Since 1969, experiments have been conducted with employer association bargaining. Eight such bargaining units have been formed. The following table provides approximate statistics for the seven that engaged in collective bargaining during 1974 as school authorities' associations.

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[1] ATA Teacher Welfare Department's reports to the Association's 1974 and 1975 Annual Representative Assemblies comprise the source for these statistics.

TABLE

SCHOOL BOARD AND TEACHER INVOLVEMENT IN SAA COLLECTIVE BARGAINING DURING 1974[2]

ASTA ZONE	SCHOOL AUTHORITY ASSOCIATION	BOARDS	TEACHERS
One	Northern Alberta	2	274
Two	North (West) Central Alberta	8	789
Two	North (East) Central Alberta	10	750
Three	Elk Island Region	6	792
Four	Battle River[3]	8	1,000
Five	Bow Valley	7	653
Six	Southern Alberta[4]	18	1,360
	TOTAL	59	5,618

Disbandonment of the eighth SAA comprising four school boards in Lethbridge and Medicine Hat eliminated urban participation in regional level collective bargaining. The reason frequently tendered by rural trustees for their willingness to participate in SAAs, is that this form of organization counteracts the monopolistic power of the ATA. In particular, they perceive it as a device for resisting the "whipsaw" that the ATA has traditionally employed by playing school boards against each other for purposes of escalating salaries.[5] A further justification is cited by trustees from smaller communities to the effect that the SAA model defuses much of the hostility that can be generated locally when teacher contracts are in dispute. Hard feelings, even during the course of a teacher strike, can be deflected from local personalities. Blame is easily attached to prominent figures in the ASTA and ATA hierarchies. On the other hand however, trustees, and administrators from jurisdictions that have opted for local bargaining, criticize the SAA model because it allegedly diminishes local involvement. They fear less the superior resources of the ATA monolith than they do the 'empire building' in the ASTA of which SAAs are perceived as but one example.

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[2] Statistics for teachers involved are drawn from ASTA records and, in some instances, are estimated only.

[3] Operated under the second year of a two-year agreement during 1974.

[4] One jurisdiction withdrew after collective agreement reached with the ATA in December of 1973.

[5] Whether the SAA organization effectively eliminates the 'whipsaw' remains a moot point. The reverse might be argued namely, that it inheres the potential for an infinitely more potent whipsaw, particularly in the event that the ATA secures a major salary breakthrough with one SAA.

There exists no standard format insofar as the details of SAA organization are concerned. Generally, each SAA is governed by a directorship. Directors representing each member schoolboard are empowered to ratify any memorandum of agreement negotiated with the ATA. Such action is unlikely without prior consultation between the directors and their boards. In some instances, a negotiating committee is struck from within the directors' ranks. In others, all directors insist on the right to be present at the bargaining table. The latter causes problems, not only with regard to space, but also with respect to secrecy. Because effective collective bargaining is almost impossible without confidentiality within a negotiating team, the chairman may insist on retaining the right to designate its composition. Opposition to this tactic was cited as one reason for one jurisdiction's withdrawal from membership in a SAA (Calgary Herald: 25 January, 1974). The dilemma arising out of conflict between the need for intelligent participation by trustees in collective bargaining on the one hand, and on the other, the need for confidentiality, is discussed further in a subsequent section.

The other basic collective bargaining organization mode adopted by school boards is local bargaining. Again, the range of trustee participation varies. In some jurisdictions, a deliberate effort is made to involve only a relatively small proportion of the board's membership directly in collective bargaining. The perceived desirability of confidentiality is one motive underlying this ploy. Efficiency is another reason. Frequently, school trustees endorse this organizational arrangement either out of lack of interest in, or distaste for, collective bargaining. Membership on a school board negotiation committee is sometimes employed as a socialization device, calculated to 'open the eyes' of a recalcitrant trustee considered to hold sympathies that are too 'pro teacher'. "We had a person who got elected with the promise that things were going to be better for the teachers," remarked a veteran trustee negotiator. "Well, that one sure changed the tune after seeing them in the bargaining sessions. Now there's nobody on the board tougher," he concluded with grim satisfaction (Paraphrased--Field Notes: November 29, 1973). Membership on negotiation committees is not always a product of haphazard selection or ulterior motives. Some jurisdictions follow the practice of 'grooming' individual trustees for positions of heavy responsibility with respect to collective bargaining. Prior assignments in the area of personnel management or staffing are typically utilized.[6] Participation in collective bargaining by only a small fraction of a school board's total membership serves a practical purpose in dissociating the board as an entity from automatic commitment to its negotiation committee's decisions. In other words, the school board can more readily reserve the right to take that which occurs at the bargaining table under advisement. This mirrors the process followed by the teachers' bargaining agent for the purpose of securing member ratification. A memorandum of agreement completed between its negotiating committee and the ATA remains subject to ratification by the school board.

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[6] These manifestations of trustee socialization and orientation are also observable in collective bargaining at the regional level.

2. Bargaining Unit Demographic Characteristics

The range in numbers of teachers covered by particular collective agreements extends from the thousands typical of Metro[7] bargaining units, down to a score typically employed by Catholic Separate School Districts in rural areas. The largest bargaining units comprise teachers employed in the Calgary and Edmonton schools. The Calgary Board of Education and the Edmonton Public School District negotiate with approximately 4,100 and 3,600 teachers respectively. The locals representing separate school teachers in these cities have memberships of approximately 1,100 and 1,500 respectively. At the other extreme, bargaining units involving as few as 11 teachers reported collective agreement details to the ASTA central office in 1974.

3. Teacher Distribution between Urban and Rural Bargaining Units

During 1973, according to a Department of Education brochure, the four ATA locals associated with the Metro Boards accounted for 52.4 per cent of the provincial teaching force. Teachers employed in centres such as Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Red Deer, and Grande Prairie, comprised another 8 per cent. Essentially therefore, twelve collective agreements completed in Alberta's six major urban centres, cover almost two thirds of the provincial teaching force. Another twenty-five per cent are covered by the seven contracts negotiated by SAAs. The remaining fifteen per cent of Alberta's teachers are involved in negotiating the great majority of collective agreements completed in the province in any given year. These apply primarily to rural jurisdictions.

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[7] The Glossary of Terms and Abbreviations contains a working definition for Metro.

4. Separate School District Bargaining Units

Many of the small bargaining units, previously described, involve teacher locals that represent individuals in the employ of separate school districts. The ASTA Collective Bargaining Manual listed twenty-seven such locals in 1973. A few are represented in collective bargaining with SAAs. Most complete their agreements locally. The small school boards are constrained by developments in larger, neighbouring jurisdictions. Some of these small jurisdictions complete contracts with their teachers that resemble "sweetheart" agreements. That is to say, certain accommodations evident therein reflect a willingness on the part of teachers and school board to operate at less stringent levels of interpretation than might be expected in larger bargaining units.

5. Geographic Characteristics of Bargaining Units

Where teachers and trustees are dispersed over a broad geographic region, special negotiation problems arise. Communication and coordination of effort are frequently difficult. In many school divisions, for example, travelling consumes a considerable amount of time for negotiation committee members. Scheduled caucus meetings and negotiation sessions remain subject to disruption by vagaries of the weather. Special problems also arise insofar as reconciling regional perspectives into a common bargaining unit strategy is concerned. In SAAs the problem is magnified considerably.

6. Bargaining Unit Location Within Alberta

For two reasons at least, location within the province works to the disadvantage of school board collective bargaining capability. Where a school board is located in a region that is remote from Edmonton, special problems are posed with respect to securing bargaining assistance from ASTA Economic Services on an ongoing basis. Secondly, in certain regions property assessment value is such as to yield a relatively small amount of funds from supplementary requisition, thus restricting the discretion which a local school board might exercise in granting salary increases. Trustees from northern Alberta in particular, argue in favour of some system of equalized supplementary requisition as a means of compensating for discrepancy in the yield between theirs and apparently more favoured jurisdictions to the south. They argue that no account is taken in current school spending formulas, of the contribution that these northern localities make to provincial general revenue as an outcome of the sale of natural resources.

7. Variation in School Governance between Bargaining Units

Examination of school governance in bargaining units reveals three forms. These are district, divisional, and county. Reference has already been made to the possibility that differences may arise between public and separate school district approaches to collective bargaining. The county model of municipal government gives rise to two potentially troublesome collective bargaining situations that are less apparent in the school division and school district settings. One problem concerns the impact of county education committee legal status upon member collective bargaining participation. The other involves uncertainties inherent in amalgamation of municipal and education administrative structures at the local level.

The County Act, originally passed in 1950, envisaged a common governing and operating structure encompassing school board as well as municipal affairs. In 1974, the ATA listed 28 collective agreements with counties. Another 74 agreements covered teachers employed by school divisions and districts. School district and school division status remains different from that provided in statute for municipalities and trading enterprises to the extent that only the latter may exercise proprietory rights in levying taxes directly. The former must rely on the municipality to provide, subject to statutory limits, education funds requisitioned on a supplementary basis. The county model provides for the creation of a school or education committee the membership of which includes county councillors plus representatives of villages and towns. This committee operates as agent for the county council, but in three vital areas its rights and duties are circumscribed. The county council retains authority with respect to borrowing, enactment of money by-laws, and control of the education budget.

Control in these money-related areas provides county councillors with considerably more influence over education collective bargaining outcomes than that which is available to other municipal politicans. Moreover, by taking advantage of this fortuitous arrangement, county councillors overshadow the town and village representatives elected to serve as members of county school committees. When collective bargaining is the subject of discussion at school committee meetings, the councillors command greater attention with more frequent and more aggressive interjection. Their remarks display sharper insight on teacher contract ramifications, particularly insofar as settlement costs are concerned.

Another source of conflict latent within the county model that that creates difficulties during teacher salary negotiations arises from uncertainty with respect to administrative responsibility. Two administrative structures exist within many counties. On the one hand, the municipal structure is directed by a secretary-treasurer. On the other hand, the county's schools are administered by a superintendent who also may rely on the services of a ranking administrative official. In some instances, the municipal secretary-treasurer plays a leading role in teacher collective bargaining affairs. In other cases, the responsibility for these matters resides with the superintendent of schools. Each county's administrative arrangement frequently depends upon the outcome of negotiation between the two staff corps. Where each strives for greater control and are neither willing nor able to reconcile opinion differences on preferred collective bargaining strategy, organizational bargaining table effectiveness is impaired.

II BACKDROP AND PROPS

1. Inflation

When no automatic compensatory mechanism exists, inflation poses a serious threat to employee living standards. Inflation emerged during 1973 and 1974 to a level where national and international concern was aroused. In Alberta organized labour became increasingly insistent that management reimburse employees against inroads on real personal income. The ATA was not tardy in registering its concern with both school boards and the provincial government. For those experienced in school board collective bargaining with teachers, the pressure was not altogether surprising. On September 7, 1973 and ASTA Economic Services staff officer reminded trustees:

> Salary demands seem to be determined by two forces: the bargaining power of the employee (union) and his or her expectations about the future rise in the cost of living; and the uncertainty generated by media reporting. Expectations about the trend in the cost of living will be higher than in recent years. (Economic Council working paper.)

Four months previously an ATA submission to a conciliation board had cited a 5.2. per cent increase in the CPI during 1972, as one justification for its stance on higher teacher salaries. Inflationary trends had intensified by the final quarter of the year to the extent that school boards were being apprised of the wisdom of acqiescence on salary matters rather than court the risk that protracted bargaining might cause them to face even greater deterioration in the dollar's value.

Although the rate of inflation could not fail to influence school trustee, there remained considerable uncertainty in September of 1973 as to future trends. The projection in the ASTA Collective Bargaining Manual for 1974 equivocated between a 5 per cent and a 9 per cent increase. However, in January of 1974, representatives of Metro boards were reminded during debate on the question of cost-of-living bonuses that 8 or 9 per cent was a more likely minimum rate of annual increase. Simultaneously, the ASTA Economic Services Bulletin advised school boards to emphasize the 7.8 per cent annual rate of increase in the Calgary/Edmonton index while disregarding at the bargaining table the 9.1 per cent advance in the national CPI. For the twelve-month period ending September 1974, the national CPI advanced by 10.9 per cent. The Calgary/Edmonton index trailed by one percentage point.

That the school boards found it virtually impossible to anticipate accurately the rising cost of living, is not surprising in view of the extraordinary nature of economic occurrences described by The Bank of Montreal in its February Business Review (1975:2).

> Perhaps the greatest disappointment on the economic scene in Canada in 1974 was not just the persistence but, indeed, the sharp acceleration in the rate of domestic inflation. The consumer price index rose nearly 11% above the average of the previous year. In 1973, in comparison, the increase was "only" 7.6%. Wholesale prices advanced in 1974 by approximately 34%, and the index of industrial selling prices registered a 20% rise. Running counter to widely held expectations that there would be some easing, the situation in food in particular, deteriorated in 1974, with this component of the CPI posting a whopping 16.3% increase compared with 14.6% in 1973.

The economist continues with an apologia for the inaccuracy of the bank's projections, citing the unforseeable nature of the extent to which wage and cost pressures actually increased and the astounding speed with which they permeated the national economy.

By April of 1974, school trustees were expressing trepidation as to their capacity to make reasonable salary agreements while inflation continued unabated. Professor John Crispo of the University of Toronto provided little solace for school boards.

> In the current situation workers need a ten per cent increase just to 'stand still'. Now, if you add another two or three per cent to this as a productivity factor, you are looking at a minimum thirteen per cent increase. This is an awesome prospect. (Paraphrase of T.V. News Statement April 17, 1974).

The ATA News in January of 1974 had already reminded teachers that those working under two-year contracts would most likely be rendered at an 8 per cent salary disadvantage within twelve months. Out of this situation arose the unprecedented concern over the problem of paying cost-of-living bonuses, otherwise described as "reopening" collective agreements between school boards and teachers.

2. The National Economy

Employee demands for a share in the increased national wealth to which Professor Crispo alluded, are not novel in collective bargaining. ATA submissions to conciliation boards usually emphasize the ability of the economy, and hence the employer, to extend increased remuneration to employees. Trustee submissions to the same tribunals are also characterized by references to economic indicators which attempt repudiation of the teachers' claims. The 'cost-of-living plus productivity' rationale for salary agreements is summarized in an address delivered before school trustees at the ASTA Labour Relations Seminar in Edmonton on September 15, 1973. A working paper considered by ASTA Economic Council in the previous week contains a similar message.

> My first forecast is that the teachers will be demanding 'More, more and more!' Of this I am certain. Of what follows I am not. . . . Salary demands will be of an order that will more than adequately cover cost of living increases with the possibility of a demand for a COLA clause to make interim adjustments on the grid based on CPI movement in the future. (Excerpt from the text of the speech.)

Elaboration is provided in the working paper's introduction.

> Expectations about the trend in the cost of living will be higher than in recent years. It is believed that individual expectations are based mainly on the recent past six-month record. On the other hand teachers as well as other organized employees have come to expect salary increases well above the consumer price index, ostensibly on the grounds of real productivity of the country (industry, plant, etc.). They expect a share of this increase. (Empahsis added).

That is to say, uncertainty over future inflation was compounded for school boards by ambiguity in national economic indicators. For example, the ASTA working paper identified imponderables regarding export controls, world commodity prices, currency realignments, and related political considerations.

ASTA Economic Services officials predicted accurately that the annual rate of increase in the gross national product would not match 6.8 per cent realized in the first quarter of 1974. In fact, for the remaining three quarters zero growth was recorded. The economic slowdown did not manifest itself until after several crucial school board contracts had been signed. The remaining school boards continued to bargain in an economic climate characterized by stagflation. In this unusual situation, inflation assumed greater salience with teachers, trustees and the public generally, than did economic stagnation.

3. The Provincial Economy

If the national economic picture supplied little in the way of justification for an extra 'productivity' component in 1974 teacher salary agreements, the ATA could claim justification in an apparent strengthening of the province's ability to pay. In a conciliation brief prepared in April of 1973, the ATA argued:

> In considering salary increases the two most significant factors must be the state of the economy and comparability with other areas. The Alberta economy is probably as strong as it ever has been. Agriculture has produced a bountiful harvest and the market has seldom been better. Coal, oil and gas are being exported in ever-increasing quantities with prices keeping pace.

The impact of the teachers' argument might have been diminished had school trustees cited the Provincial Treasurer's announcement in the previous month that a $139 million deficit was anticipated for the government's 1973-74 fiscal year. This projection, proved inaccurate. During this contract negotiation period, a $160 million surplus was realized. This was realized prior to extensive cash inflows to the provincial treasury that followed the March 28, 1974 announcement of agreement with federal authorities on domestic crude oil pricing. This windfall guaranteed Alberta an extra $1 billion annually. Further announcements with respect to developments in Alberta's oil and gas industry served to consolidate a general feeling of optimism with respect to the capacity of the provincial economy to provide funds to the public sector.

In the bargaining unit where trustee and administrator opinion was sampled with respect to acceptability of a particular memorandum of agreement, respondents, did not rate this factor as highly as its publicity might have indicated.[8] From a list of twelve factors which might have led them to favour a memorandum that became the collective agreement for 1974, twenty-one out of seventy respondents in the SAA acknowledged the statement "The new Provincial Government oil and gas revenues will help finance the cost of this settlement." This item ranked eighth in the list on the basis of frequency with which each of the twelve opinionnaire items were acknowledged.

4. The Rural Economy in Alberta

Because the great majority of Alberta's school boards are located in rural areas, and also because until March of 1974 local property tax accounted for approximately 1/3 of school board expenditure, the rural economy has traditionally been important to the outcome of many collective bargaining sessions. The following exchange between trustees during a caucus in a rural jurisdiction illustrates the point.

> Trustee A: With things going the way they are, I don't know how we are going to be able to negotiate next year. Inflation is such a problem.
>
> Trustee B: As long as grain and beef go up, we'll be okay.
>
> Trustee C and Trustee D: (Without hesitation and in unison) They are falling.
> (Field Notes: April 2, 1974.)

Commodity price trends in the second quarter of 1974 may have provided some justification for their apparent concern. However, eight months earlier, the rural sector had not yet emerged from a phase that had continued since 1972. During that period farm cash receipts and farm net income demonstrated incredible growth. The Edmonton Journal on July 17, 1974, suggested that Canadian farmers' income had doubled between 1972 and 1974. The ramifications of this phenomenon for collective bargaining by rural school jurisdictions were articulated by one trustee negotiator when addressing his colleagues "Farm income can no longer be your anchor. . . . You can't fall back on the old rural poverty story" (Field Notes: October 10, 1973). Exasperated at the embarrassment which farmers' access to cash inflicted upon his case for a 'tough salary stance', one SAA director retorted, "The bastards are flaunting the damned stuff!" (Field Notes: November 27, 1973). On the opinion survey trustees and officials were less ready to admit that their decision on the memorandum of agreement was significantly swayed by the strength of the rural economy. To the item "The taxpayers are enjoying prosperity this year," only twelve or 14.3 per cent of those surveyed acknowledged that such a condition warranted memorandum acceptance. This item received less acknowledgement than all other suggested variables.

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[8] The Opinion Survey (see Glassary of Terms and Abbreviations) is described in Appendix A.

Despite these denials, school boards enjoyed greater fiscal liquidity during 1974 than had been the case generally for the previous three years. A downward trend in farm produce prices did not commence until February of 1974. Press reports of annual municipal meetings document a large number of municipalities that recorded budget surpluses for 1973-1974. The Minister of Education and the Minister of Municipal Affairs both were reported in the press praising these local authorities for their prudent fiscal management practices. Moreover, ratepayer resistance to spending in excess of the provincially-designated levels, may have also reflected a relatively more prosperous local tax base.

5. Developments on the National Labour Scene

Relations between employees and management generally may be pertinent to subsequent developments with respect to collective bargaining between school boards and teachers. Not only does the principle of comparability of wage and salary levels apply, but also matters relating to agreement content and public policy with respect to collective bargaining and work stoppages. The education collective bargaining arena is also subject to influences arising from the impact that national labour unrest and militancy exerts upon the national economy.

With regard to the principle of comparability, this provided the several courses of action for school trustees at the commencement of the 1974 round of collective bargaining. The first, which inflation demonstrated to be untenable, was to anchor salary concessions in existing two-year agreements under which 60 per cent of Alberta teachers were employed. This would have allowed increases approximating only 6.5 per cent over 1973 levels. The second course explained by ASTA staff officers at zone briefings to school trustees was as follows:

> The second plateau would be the generalized comparisons to other settlements and wage movements. This would of course be higher than the first plateau. And even though these types of figures are diverse and wide-ranging they tend to be less than the consumer price index due to the real, albeit strained restraint organized labour has shown till now. (Economic Council working paper.)

The trustees were advised that this type of stance would probably yield salary settlements in the neighbourhood of 8.5 to 9 per cent above those paid under previous agreements. Wage and salary statistics for both the private and public sectors were cited in support of this bargaining position with considerable emphasis being placed upon current remuneration rates for Alberta government and municipal employees.

At the outset, Alberta school board negotiators expressed confidence that maximum settlements ranging no higher than 8 per cent were attainable. 1974 was considered an 'off' year, not only with respect to the number of Alberta teachers whose contracts were subject to renegotiation, but also for trade unions generally. Only 40 per cent of workers employed under major collective agreements were scheduled to be involved in bargaining. At the beginning of the year, in spite of inflation, labour's demands were relatively restrained. Of this period Time Magazine observes in its July 24, 1974 cover story that workers displayed "saintly patience." Typical of the phenomena in Canada was the December, 1973 agreement between the Federal Treasury Board and 360,000 clerks which provided for increases of 7.5 and 8.5 per cent in 1974 and 1975 respectively. The 9 per cent wage increase that a federally appointed arbitrator provided 56,000 non-operating railway workers in the following month was also applauded as a favourable settlement. However, within six months the union was organing to win an upward revision of this award.

During the first quarter of 1974, pressure for larger annual wage and salary adjustments began to increase. For this period, negotiated wage settlements averaged 10.8 per cent, a rate of increase unsurpassed in any previous three month period. This acceleration was even more remarkable in view of the fact that many of the traditional 'lighthouse' industries such as meatpacking and rubber, had not been able to record agreement between workers and management. The negotiated pay settlements in the first quarter of 1973 had averaged only 8.4 per cent and in the final quarter of 1973 had registered 9.8 per cent.

By December of 1973 relations between government employees and management showed increasing evidence of deterioration. Workers employed by the provincial government and Alberta municipalities became; steadfastly militant. Following a widely publicized strike Edmonton Transit drivers won a considerable pay increase. Three other locals organized by the Canadian Union of Public Employees fought for commensurate treatment from that city. Meanwhile, the provincial capital witnessed restiveness on the part of members of the Civil Service Association of Alberta. In this case much of the trouble focussed upon dissatisfaction with current collective agreements. The ASTA urged the Minister of Labour to resist civil servant demands that their collective agreements be reopened. The government demonstrated sympathy for their employees' requests. Cost-of-Living adjustments for government employees created problems for school boards who had to match these increases in order to attract and maintain clerical staff. The two Edmonton school boards raised teacher salaries while adjusting payments to other employees. This subject is discussed in greater detail in chapter five.

An unprecedented number of work stoppages by workers in Canada may also have influenced school trustees' expectations as they commenced collective bargaining with the ATA. During 1974 the ATA refrained from using the strike alternative. Nevertheless, mass demonstrations by Ontario teachers and restiveness displayed by other government employees may have intimidated Alberta school trustees who had recently witnessed strikes in several SAAs. Moreover, in the private sector the number of strikes had grown significantly. There had been 532 and 724 in 1972 and 1973 respectively. A record for strikes was set at 1,216 in 1974. Meanwhile, the number of man days lost through stoppages increased by 62 per cent over the 1973 figure. The situation with respect to the strike climate was rendered even more alarming by the fact that only a relatively small number of contracts had been subject to renegotiation in 1974.

6. Teacher Salaries Elsewhere in Canada

ASTA staff, officers check salary settlements that are completed between employers and teachers in provinces other than Alberta. Comparisons are less than systematic, and are usually formulated from reports in the media or information acquired during interaction at seminars. Where conditions elsewhere reflect favourably on a particular ATA claim, trustees may be assured that the information will be placed forcefully before them at the bargaining table.

Perhaps because of its geographic proximity and mobility of teachers between the two provinces, developments in British Columbia remain a source of some interest to Alberta school boards. In the first place, during 1974, the supply of teachers available to the latter may have been adversely effected by an increased demand in the former. Higher salaries were suggested by several school trustees as a means of avoiding further deterioration in the availability of competent teaching staff. Secondly, because the system of dispute resolution which is geared to statutory deadlines provides earlier settlements in British Columbia school jurisdictions, the principle of comparability forms yet another guideline for Alberta school boards and the ATA. Thirdly, the British Columbia model, geared to judicial-type arbitration of disputes, constitutes a ready example for critics of the Alberta free collective bargaining model and its phased dispute settlement procedure predicated on the ultimate right to strike. Fourthly, Alberta school boards periodically display interest in wage settlement formulas that British Columbia school authorities have explored with their employees.

The earliest salary reports from British Columbia in December of 1973 revealed relatively high increases. These contracts which were settled by mutual agreement averaged a yearly 11.89 per cent increase. For the most part, these settlements represented a minority of contracts subject to negotiation. ASTA Economic Services personnel cautioned Alberta school trustees that contracts in the more central and populous regions of British Columbia remained unresolved by the deadline for submission to arbitration. In January of 1974 they reported arbitrated settlements with average increases of 10.75 per cent. The overall average was 11.09 per cent. At that time, these increases represented rates several percentage points above that which many Alberta school boards proposed to offer their teachers.

On February 25th, 1974 the Edmonton Journal carried a story under the by-line "Sasketchewan Teachers Win 17% Pay Boost." The more discerning reader would have realized that the increase was in a two-year agreement. For 1974 the actual payroll cost to individual boards was cited as approximately 9.05 per cent, a level of spending to which publicly at least a number of Alberta school boards were not prepared to acquiesce. Because much of the conversation pertaining to agreements in other provinces is based upon hearsay, remarks such as, "They're fairly high; round about 12% on the grid," were not readily contestable. These general estimations may have served to inflate levels of settlement which Alberta trustees were prepared to tolerate.

Although incorporation of cost-of-living (COLA) clauses within teacher and school board collective agreements emanated originally from bargaining in the private sector, developments in several provincial education settings evoked special consideration in Alberta. For example, the "Vancouver Formula" a composite weighted index of wages and salaries paid in the locality, provided the basis for agreement on teacher salaries between 1971 and 1973. This formula had superseded another employed in the private sector as early as 1965 and considered with some interest by teachers and school boards in 1969 and 1970. Prior to abandonment of the device at the end of 1973, a joint committee comprised of representatives of the ASTA, ATA, the Department of Education and the Alberta Department of Labour, studied its operation and prepared a report. On December 6, 1973, the ATA and ASTA presidents, both of whom were delegation members, appended their signatures to the following:

> WHEREAS the undersigned recognize the merits inherent in the use of a formula system for the determination of teachers' salary schedules, and
>
> WHEREAS no objection will be registered by the parties if school board and teacher negotiators mutually agree to adopt such a formula system.
>
> THEREFORE, IT IS RECOMMENDED, that this joint report be circulated to all Alberta School Trustees' Association member boards and Alberta Teachers' Association locals so that school boards and their teacher employees shall be encouraged to consider seriously and undertake on an experimental basis collective bargaining procedures which incorporate a formula system for the determination of salary schedules.

At the January 31st meeting of the ASTA Economic Council where the delegation's report was presented for consideration, the following recommendation to ASTA Executive Council was endorsed.

> THAT the formula method of settling agreements be considered inappropriate in bargaining practice in Alberta at this time.

Where, during the course of the researcher's observation at trustee caucuses in the months following, the COLA suggestion was raised as a potential bargaining option by the ASTA staff officer, it too was greeted unenthusiastically.

Alberta school trustees were not without their precedents for incorporation of COLA clauses within their contracts with teachers. The Saskatchewan province-wide agreement for 1974 and 1975 carried the proviso that should the Saskatoon-Regina CPI exceed the contractual percentage salary increase, an automatic adjustment would be effected. A similar phased adjustment process based upon the Composite City CPI for Winnipeg, constituted one base for agreement in the Winnipeg School Division.

7. Alberta Teacher Salary Increases in the Second Year of Existing Agreements

During 1974, 60 per cent of Alberta teachers were employed under the provisions of the second year in two-year term collective agreements. Approximately three quarters of this group "locked" into two year contracts were employed by three Metro school boards. Another 1,000 approximately were subject to a two-year collective agreement negotiated with the eight member boards of the Battle River SAA. The salary increases negotiated for this second phase of the 1973 and 1974 agreements approximated 6.5 per cent on the average. When experience and education increment costs were added to this grid increase, school boards anticipated an overall teacher payroll cost increase of 9.0 to 9.5 per cent at the beginning of 1974. However, as was mentioned previously, at the end of the first quarter and before all one-year agreements were concluded, the two Edmonton Metro school boards extended a $250 or 2.5 per cent cost of living bonus to teachers as well as to non-teaching staff. In both instances, the offer was duly accepted.

8. Municipal Fiscal Reform in Alberta during 1974

By authority vested under the British North America Act of 1867, the legislature of the Province of Alberta has delegated revenue collecting functions to its municipalities. The tax on the assessed value of property has been the vehicle employed. School authorities, through the supplementary requisition, have been granted access to this revenue source. Furthermore, since 1961 when a School Foundation Program Plan was instituted in Alberta, municipalities were required to collect a standard levy for payment into its trust account. This assessment equalized throughout the province according to the fair actual value of property was 30 mills and 28 mills for 1972 and 1973 respectively. Department of Education estimates for 1973 reveal that 38 per cent of school board expenditures were financed from the local property tax source. This figure comprised 26 per cent allocated via the School Foundation Program Fund disbursements and 12 per cent received as a consequence of supplementary requisition on the local municipality. Provincial government general revenue provided in 1973 approximately 62 per cent of school board funds.

On February 15, 1974 the following press release signalled a significant alteration in the traditional pattern of school finance in Alberta.

> Dave Russell Minister of Municipal Affairs today announced a $22 million program of improved benefits to the Alberta Property Tax Reduction Plan and municipal assistance retroactive to January 1, 1974. As well as increasing levels of financial assistance to individual taxpayers and municipal governments, the program will result in significant simplified administrative procedures.
>
> The Program involves action in three parts:

Increased assistance to Residential Property Tax--Estimated Cost--TAX RELIEF	$13,100,00
Reduced Municipal Requisitions for the School Foundation Fund--TAX RELIEF	$ 4,400,000
Increased grants to Municipal Governments TAX RELIEF	$ 5,200.000

Within two months of this announcement, the relief cited in part 1 was extended to include non-residential property, and thus the 28 mill levy for school foundation program funding was eliminated. The provincial government henceforth undertook to raise approximately 90 per cent of local school board funds from revenue sources such as the income tax, as well as receipts from the sale of oil and natural gas.

Although the full impact of this reform could not manifest itself in collective bargaining over 1974 teacher contracts, ASTA staff officers reacted against what they perceived as a "double standard" detrimental to local school board autonomy. The following comment was presented for trustee consideration at the Association's March 28 Economic Council meeting.

> In view of recent announcements and decisions by the Department of Municipal Affairs, school trustees in the Province of Alberta must seriously examine their roles and duties to education in the province.
>
> Within the span of three months in 1974 the following actions by the Department of Municipal Affairs have taken place:

(1) Grants to Municipalities increased 15%, School Boards less than 9%.

(2) School Foundation Program levy reduced by lowering of assessed value from 35% to 20%, by using a split mill rate. Municipalities can retain monies previously obtained by education. School Boards receive no extra funds locally from this source

(3) Guidelines or ceiling of 7 1/2% increase in spending previously established for Municipalities removed. Control on School Board spending still enforced at 7%.

The question of equity surrounding government restriction on the right of local school boards to increase the supplementary requisition beyond prescribed limits was debated in the media and at ASTA conferences. Nevertheless, this issue remained unresolved at the end of 1974. At the ASTA Annual Convention in November, the Minister of Education intimated that some future concession might be forthcoming where arrangements could be made to hold local school authorities directly accountable to the taxpayer for monies thus raised.

9. Local Autonomy in Jeopardy

In instances where local autonomy is valued and school officials regard collective bargaining responsibility as being vital to its maintenance, an apparent centralization of this function in several provinces is perceived with some trepidation. For example, in Quebec and New Brunswick local school boards have been divested of responsibility for negotiation of school teacher salaries. Alberta school board officials also comment upon developments in Ontario and British Columbia as providing further evidence of a drift toward provincial control in Canada as a whole. Militancy by teachers in both of these provinces had caused the respective governments considerable inconvenience during 1973 and 1974. This observation prompted one respondent to volunteer that the Alberta government might not readily support school boards in confrontation with the ATA. At the ASTA Labour Relations Seminar in September of 1973, a keynote speaker cautioned school boards against apathy which contributed to centralization of major collective bargaining functions by the provincial government in Saskatchewan.

In Alberta questions pertaining to erosion of local autonomy and desirability of provincial salary schedules have been broached previously. Odynak (1963) has outlined the course of events in 1958 when the ATA effectively frustrated the Blackstock Commission in its investigation of the latter. Provincial government regulation of local school boards' authority to requisition supplementary funds continued to fire debate with respect to local autonomy. Municipal finance reform was perceived by trustees and ASTA staff as yet another example of provincial government intervention that will eventually deprive local school boards of all control. The net effect of these perceived encroachments was to generate greater caution in calculating SAA collective bargaining and strategy so as to avoid provoking further intervention. For example, when rationalizing a decision to accept a less-than-ideal collective agreement with the teachers, a school board spokesman retorted:

> You have to think of more than a strike. A strike won't do anything with the Department of Labour. Remember we had one here last year, and if that keeps on happening, someone starts getting known as a strike monger. Those people at the Board of Industrial Relations will pretty soon start the cry, 'Get someone else in there!' Also, you've got to remember that they might start having second thoughts about our employers' associations and we don't want that. It's not a settlement that I like, but if it was strike or settle, I had to take it. (Field Notes: January 10, 1974) (Remarks paraphrased)

The thrust of this statement also involves one other relatively intangible component of the collective bargaining scenario, namely government attitude toward work stoppages in the public sector generally and in education in particular.

10. Public Policy and Work Stoppages in the Public Sector

With the rapid spread of collective bargaining to most parts of the public sector between 1965 and 1970, public policy in Canada has been severely tested specifically in situations where questions pertaining to the public interest have arisen. For civil servants, other than those employed in Quebec and New Brunswick, H. V. Woods (1973:335) observes:

> The conventional wisdom prevalent in other jurisdictions in Canada and all the United States supports the prohibition of the strike in public service employment and places the emphasis on intensive mediation and resort to either independent arbitration or settlements imposed by public authorities.

In cases where the right to strike is exercised lawfully, legislatures usually retain emergency power, sometimes vested in a minister of the crown, which permits termination of work stoppages that impinge upon the public interest. The Government of Canada has in recent years, for example, legislated termination of strikes by workers in several facets of trade and transport industry. In 1973 members of the Canadian Brotherhood of Railway Transport and General Workers Union were ordered to resume work while an arbitrator was appointed to settle their dispute. During the period when Alberta school boards were negotiating 1974 teacher contracts, grain elevator workers at the port of Vancouver were denied temporarily the right to take strike action. Hinting at a tougher impending stance on work stoppages the federal deputy minister of Labour remarked:

> Unless labour and management make greater efforts to avoid direct confrontation in collective bargaining, the public might demand, and legislators accept, more restrictive industrial relations laws. (Edmonton Journal January 9, 1974)

Labour however, was apparently not the only party for which this 'tough' stance was intended. An arbitrator appointed by the federal government to make an award on a dispute involving railway workers supplemented a relatively high wage increase with a warning to employers:

> The message to the railways is that they should enter into meaningful negotiations much sooner. Had they really tried a year ago, I'm sure they could have had a much cheaper settlement. (Edmonton Journal January 17, 1974)

Alberta school boards confronted a new round of collective bargaining in October of 1973 with a revised provincial labour code. The new statute added to uncertainties respecting the role which public policy might play in the disposition of collective bargaining disputes.

As mentioned previously, the revised Alberta Labour Act set the stage for more flexible participation by the Minister of Manpower and Labour in the general realm of dispute investigation and resolution. The ASTA Collective Bargaining Manual carried the following advice for school boards.

> Its (the Labour Act's) legislators expect the conciliation process to be one of 'breaking' stalemates, and of assisting the parties to settle their differences. In actual fact, its degree of success in settling teacher-board disputes through conciliation has been pretty dismal.
>
> Until this new provision under the conciliation procedures has been tested, the ASTA recommends that it remains in the interest of school boards to avoid conciliation and make every effort to come to satisfactory settlements.

Perplexity was compounded moreover, by the government's approach to disputes and strikes elsewhere in the provincial public sector. In 1971 and 1973, teacher strikes had been terminated by the Minister of Manpower on emergency grounds after intensive top level government mediation had failed. However, his attitude to nurses' and bus drivers' strikes suggested a ministerial double standard (ATA News 15 January, 1974). A 50 day stoppage by Edmonton bus drivers during winter months, was not in the Minister's perception, a source of privation equal to that generated by a much shorter teachers' strike.

11. Evolving Societal Attitudes and Standards

Just as theatrical performance is limited in certain respects by prevailing community or cultural standards and tastes, an amorphous body of public opinion impinges upon collective bargaining between school boards and teachers. The parties make their respective assessments of that public opinion and strive to impose definitions which enhance the effectiveness of performance in given settings. Public opinion cannot clearly be separated from such items as public policy with respect to the right to strike or developments on the national labour scene. There are, however, other dimensions encountered in the course of this study which, although difficult to evaluate quantitatively, were apparently influential as factors taken into account by those engaged in collective bargaining with teachers.

School trustee debate on bargaining positions and possible concessions include reference to such recent phenomena as women's liberation and heightened public awareness of individual human rights. Trustees in 1974 were predisposed to liberalization of contract maternity leave clauses. This increased tolerance may not be solely attributable to heightened consciousness with regard to the status of women. From the ASTA, school boards received advice that existing practice may contravene provincial human rights legislation which of itself may reflect changing public opinion.

Another area in which changing public opinion effects school trustee decision making on contract substance is that pertaining to fringe benefits. Commonly cited in this category are employer contributions to employee medical, pharmaceutical, and dental costs. Particularly in rural jurisdictions, school trustees have felt that public support was sufficient to warrant strong resistance to incorporation of such benefits within collective agreements. In October of 1972, when only one SAA in rural Alberta contributed to employee Alberta Health Care preminiums[8] (at a rate of 50%), the rural jurisdictions' point of view was argued before a conciliation board hearing.

> The ratepayers in (this jurisdiction) have clearly indicated their disapproval of employers' payment toward these costs. (This jurisdiction) firmly believes that there is no incentive for insurance payments for teachers as no tax relief exists now. (This jurisdiction) strongly objects to becoming a bill payer and insurance broker for its teachers. The teachers are responsible professional and should be able to decide what non-compulsory insurance plans they require, and further they should be able to make the necessary payments as required. (SASAA Conciliation Board Submission: October, 1972)

Subsequently, when the directors of this SAA chose to take a stand on this issue, and others pertaining to salary and allowances, a strike ensued which elicited a comment on a radio phone-in program that reflects the traditional resistance to extra benefits for rural teachers.

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[8] As of September, 1973 the ASTA Collective Bargaining Manual listed only slightly in excess of 1/3 or of current collective agreements as containing employer subsidization of Alberta Health Care premiums, while Blue Cross contributions appeared in less than 1/3. Jurisdictions in the cities and other urban centres, for the most part, were committed to 50% subsidization.

> I may be old fashioned fellas, and so were my grand parents, and so were my folks. We was always able to 'hoe our own row' without asking the taxpayer to donate to our health plan in any way shape or form, or pay our doctor's bill. And I don't agree with your fringe benefits for your health nor anything else. Now, if a person's got any ability, he'll pay his own and 'hoe his own row'. . . . I think it's all wrong to even ask the taxpayer or somebody else to look after your health and welfare. I don't agree with that what-so-ever. (Transcript Field Notes: March 14, 1973)

The dispute was eventually arbitrated without any school board concession on this item. As school boards faced renewed pressure from the ATA in November of 1973, not only for subsidization on health and pharmaceutical plans, but also for dental care, one director from another SAA remarked to his urban counterpart, "Those plans might be okay for you people in Calgary and even Canmore, but my ratepayers won't buy them!" (Field Notes: November 29, 1973) Notwithstanding this type of opposition, SAAs were eventually forced to concede higher subsidization of employee group insurance plans. Initial demands by teachers in contract talks for 1974 contained reference to subsidization of Alberta Health Care, Blue Cross and dental care. These items were dropped from consideration in most rural bargaining units. When meeting with his board which endorsed a memorandum without such benefits, a director remarked, "There are some places where they have these things . . . but our ratepayers cannot afford these . . . . . The teachers are well-paid people, and they can pay their own way!" (Field Notes: May 3, 1974). Commenting upon this type of resistance typical of rural trustees, an ASTA official observed pessimistically, "It's a very small fist in a very large crack (in the dyke)."

(Field Notes: January 6th, 1974).

Ultimately, public opinion with regard to the contents of teacher contracts, appears to be gauged by school board negotiators in terms of cost to the taxpayer and whether the taxpayer's outrage would be sufficient to sustain the school board in its stance should a strike be precipitated. In particular, those school trustees whose previous experience included membership on negotiating committees during teacher work stoppages, reiterated public support as constituting the component crucial to success. In 1974, considerable uncertainty existed in trustee negotiation caucuses as to the extent that the public would support school boards in strikes arising from teacher salary demands. Teachers, for their part, appeared content to score gains in the salary schedule, for restraint on the matter of medical, pharmaceutical, and dental care premiums.

SUMMARY

Complete appreciation of the calibre of an actor's performance is contingent upon an understanding of the setting in which the portrayal takes place. This understanding must extend beyond knowledge of the physical givens inherent in a particular site, to the actor's choice and use of backdrop as well as stage props.

Collective bargaining is acted out at the regional and the local level in Alberta. Bargaining unit size ranges from ATA locals with memberships numbering in the several thousands to others with fewer than twenty teachers. More than half the teaching force holds membership in four ATA locals located in Edmonton and Calgary. Another twenty-five per cent of teachers are subject to contracts negotiated in seven regions. Catholic separate school districts in large part account for the many collective agreements negotiated by small bargaining units. Bargaining units can also be categorized according to geographic size, remoteness from urban centres, and type of school governance. Each arrangement poses special problems for actors located therein when mounting their respective collective bargaining performances.

The actors also confront circumstances arising in the general socio-economic-political milieu. Inflation constituted a major problem in 1973 and in 1974. Its inroads on the ability to operate schools notwithstanding however, school trustees also found that general economic prosperity undermined their traditional 'ability to pay' criterion for resisting ATA salary demands. Salary increases in comparable sectors and jurisdictions also undermined the capacity of particular Alberta school boards to hold salary increases to previously acceptable levels. Moreover, the provincial government's action in paying its employees cost-of-living adjustments created difficulties during 1974 for school boards that were reluctant to reopen two-year collective agreements with teachers. Alteration in the provincial municipal finance structure that increased the proportion of school funds derived from general revenue, also foreshadowed a softening of local resistance to teacher salary increases.

Modified societal attitudes toward contract content created a climate within which teachers could argue more convincingly for a broadening of contract scope to embrace matters other than salary-related items. In 1973 and 1974 private sector collective agreements provided teachers and the public generally, with evidence that employers were prepared to subsidize their workers over a broad range of health and welfare benefits. Teachers were also susceptible to management ideologies that, in collective bargaining terms, warrant agreement on consultation clauses.

These management principles buttressed the ATA's claim with respect to its membership's desired professional status. General labour unrest, manifested by unprecedented public sector work stoppages and a record number of strikes in the economy, created a climate amenable to teacher militancy in support of welfare and professional demands.

CHAPTER VIII

ROLE PERFORMANCE IN SCHOOL BOARD COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

A Typology of Frontstage Performances

The nature and extent of collective bargaining participation by school trustees, as well as others whose assistance is enlisted by school boards, is elaborated in this chapter. Generalization on this subject requires caution. Practice may vary in particular jurisdictions from year to year. Furthermore, school boards differ in the way they mobilize for collective bargaining. Analysis of collective bargaining participation therefore risks two distinct types of error. In the first place, it may produce prescriptive generalizations which discount originality and flexibility which particular school boards display in developing unique organizational adaptations to local problems. Secondly, preoccupation with jurisdictional differences may create an illusion that collective bargaining by 147 school boards in Alberta constitutes an atomistic or particularistic phenomenon. This study proposes a compromise between these equally unsatisfactory descriptive modes. Within the overall theatrical configuration it relies upon the personal ideal-type construct as a vehicle for isolating salient participation commonalities.

In chapter one and chapter two reference is made to the emphasis which typology development received in recent literature reviewing new strategies for social research generally, and for inquiry in educational administration specifically. Max Weber is generally recognized as the original proponent of ideal-type analysis. His formularization is incomplete and considerable discussion has ensued with respect to Weber's precise meaning. Phillips (1971:155) argues the merits of utilizing typologies for organizing field research data. He cites Weber's definition.

> An ideal type is formed by the one-sided accentuation of one or more points of view and by synthesis of a great many diffuse, discrete, more or less present and occasionally absent concrete individual phenomena, which are arranged according to those one-sidedly emphasized viewpoints into a unified analytical construct . . . . In its conceptual purity, this mental construct . . . cannot be found empirically anywhere in reality. It is a utopia. (Weber's emphasis)

Reference has been made in chapter two to Scott's (1968) use of a game framework in describing horse racing's organizational dynamic. Scott also incorporates a typology of race track habitues. In the high school setting, Palonsky (1975) articulates a typology of students that includes "Hempies", "Squeaks", "Truckers", and "Cruisers".

The categorization of types of collective bargaining participation witnessed in this study also serves verification purposes outlined in chapter two. The typology comprises an important vehicle for determining authenticity in terms of the anthropological definition cited in that section. Additional elaboration is provided by other social scientists. For example, Scott (1968:6) explains his racing organization typology by borrowing Schutz' characterization of the ideal type as resembling a "puppet . . . with just that kind of knowledge he needs to perform the job for the sake of which he was brought into the scientific world." In this study the consciousness vested in star performers, supporting actors, gladiators, and the chorus is formulated from raw observation of the performers. With reference to this relationship between the researcher's interpretation and the empirical world, Scott (1968:6) observes:

> This constructed consciousness that the observer gives to the puppet must meet the criterion of relevance. That is, the stranger following the model of the personal ideal type behaving in typical situations would be adjudged by social actors as behaving appropriately.

This notion parallels that underlying Phillips' (1971:156) formularization that he labels a "methodological phantom." Natonson (1966:150), Wilson (1970:706), Silverman (1972c:190), and Jehenson (1973:220) each attest to the ideal type construct's potential value for reporting phenomenologically oriented research.

The remainder of this chapter is devoted to explication of four personal ideal types that emerged as a consequence of the researcher's ongoing interaction with individuals encountered in the school board collective bargaining setting. No single individual corresponds to all the attributes listed for each typification. The categorization is not exhaustive. It portrays the basic variations in the nature and extent of involvement in collective bargaining by people whose common interest is that they have some association with the school boards' negotiation enterprise. The four typifications are labelled for their relevance to dramatic spectacle namely, star performer, supporting actor, gladiator, and the chorus. Field note material suggests that more painstaking inquiry and investigation would provide substantive bases for other categories listed in a thesaurus under the "actor" sub-heading. The general typology which follows serves this study's immediate purpose by allowing its reporting to go beyond "the particulars (concrete, essential) to discover that which is essential" (Psathas 1973:10) in school board collective bargaining organization.

The Star Performer

According to Funk and Wagnalls Standard College Dictionary (Canadian Edition), the lead in dramatic presentation is played by a performer having a starring role.[1] In the school board collective bargaining spectacle, the term 'star performer' is keyed more closely to the notion of visibility than to any measure of the amount of bargaining table work that an individual may accomplish. In other words, a star performer need not necessarily act in the capacity of spokesman at the bargaining table. Furthermore, to be cast as bargaining table spokesman does not guarantee an individual's status as a star performer. The visibility of star performers is such that they are identifiable with relative ease. Observers and participants with even a modicum of school board collective bargaining experience, when questioned on the matter, can name star performers in many jurisdictions throughout the province.

Visibility is a product of many circumstances, many deliberately cultivated by the star performer. Initially, the star performer is recognized for an extensive amount of experience earned through years of participation in school and/or local municipal government. During the course of this participation a pattern of involvement in collective bargaining with teachers is generally followed. Where bargaining table spokesman experience is included with negotiating committee participation, enhanced visibility is virtually inevitable. In the event of impasse for example, the usual ASTA publicity afforded a star performer is supplemented by identification in ATA publications as well as general news media recognition. Regardless of whether disputes develop or whether the star performer serves as bargaining table spokesman, this individual normally accepts responsibility for 'selling' a particular bargaining position or memorandum of agreement to the school board. Once assumed, this duty tends to exert an influence that becomes cumulative in creating for the individual an aura of 'collective bargaining expertise'. This ambience increases in prominence as the star performer develops a record of participation in collective bargaining training programs, conducted preferably in the United States or at some prestigious institute located in Canada, but outside Alberta. School trustees whose collective bargaining interests are relatively weak assist the star performer's image enhancing activity. By deferring frequently (although not invariably) in those instances where collective bargaining judgement is considered paramount, they assist the lead in effecting closure upon star performance.

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[1] Unless otherwise noted, theatrical definitions used with respect to personal ideal types in this section are all drawn from the same dictionary source.

Extensive involvement in the interaction that occurs between the actors and those responsible for producing the school board collective bargaining spectacle, allows the star performer to maintain a sharp profile. Much of this involvement occurs in the course of ASTA council and committee work. The proceedings and organization of the Association's Annual Convention constitute another such venue. Only rarely does a star performer elect to be absent from an ASTA seminar or conference. When absence is unavoidable, other civic demands are frequently responsible. The star performer, when not acting in the capacity of session convenor or panel discussion member at these special events, remains conspicuous for his/her volubility during general discussion periods.

Outside the realm of functions organized by the ASTA and municipal bodies, this type of individual takes care to maintain personal contacts with individuals and groups located within the Association, as well as those located in the provincial government's structure and the ATA. The ASTA Economic Services department for example, may be perceived with suspicion for its apparent designs which would subvert local (or personal) prerogatives. Nevertheless, the star performer employs ASTA office to, gain advantage. It constitutes a valuable information source on developments in collective bargaining throughout the province. Moreover, membership on ASTA Executive Council is a covetted office. It yields access to decision making, not only within the Association, but also within the provincial government hierarchy. ASTA Executive Council and Economic Council involvement also yields access to social contacts with counterparts located in the structure of provincial-level agencies. These interactions enhance other more formal relationships. In view of these advantages, the notable frequency which characterizes the star performer's contacts, either in person or by telephone, with ASTA central office is not surprising. Conflict latent within the ASTA's operational structure, and to which reference was made in a previous chapter, occurs as a consequence of collision of interest between star performers and those for whom these individuals would prefer a role equivalent to that of second fiddle, or, to be more theatrically precise, supporting actor.

The Supporting Actor

To a considerable degree the functions and tasks performed by the supporting actor are self evident. A description of this personal ideal type becomes more difficult however when the focus is removed from functions and tasks, to such areas as office and personal characteristics.

The effectiveness achieved by a school board's negotiating committee depends upon the information it can secure for the purposes of decision-making. This information includes facts and advice. In the first instance therefore, the trustee caucus must be familiarized with shortcomings in existing agreements, as well as the ramifications of teacher proposals for future agreements. Whether the proposals involve salaries, allowances, or other conditions of employment, the cost of the collective agreement is usually affected. Consequently, the school board's fiscal position remains a source of constant concern. Closely allied with this need to understand the budgetary implications of bargaining table proposals is the necessity for immediate access to statistics on such matters as staff salary grid placement, staff eligibility for other allowances, salary settlements in adjacent and/or relevant jurisdictions, and the current status of negotiations with teachers in other bargaining units.

While the advice which must be exchanged between members of caucus also draws its quality from the extent to which the participants are informed on these matters, there are components that can be described as non-statistical, but nevertheless, are vitally important. In this realm, members of the school board negotiating committee require to be kept abreast of developments on the provincial education political scene. For example, they search for indications of the Minister's and the Department of Education's intent with respect to future financing of school boards. They gauge the predisposition of the Minister and officials of the Department of Manpower and Labour toward conciliation and strikes. Furthermore, they must be alert to the ramifications of existing or impending legislation for their collective bargaining positions. Also at the political level, school board negotiating committees must calculate their collective bargaining strategy in terms of assessment of ATA reaction, not only insofar as the likelihood of strike action is concerned, but also in terms of its current standing with decision makers in the provincial government hierarchy. Finally, some assessment of the climate of militancy extant among teachers in the bargaining unit, as well as elsewhere, inevitably features in caucus deliberations. Eventually, these matters must be weighed and a bargaining position formulated. The ultimate criteria that must be applied as to whether a given position is tenable concerns the question of whether a school board could fight a strike over the matter.[2]

Caucus collaboration on these matters and others, is insufficient of itself. There are instances, some arising at the bargaining table, and others which occur at intervals throughout each collective bargaining round, when consultation and counsel is required by those charged with responsibility for presenting a school board's case at the bargaining table. A confidant may be sought within the board's administrative hierarchy or among its trustees. Outside the school board, consultants might be located for a fee to supply constructive comment. The number of offices, both administrative and elective, in which supporting actors may be located is so diverse as to suggest the possibility for further discrete typifications within the general supporting actor category. Information collected in this study and time for analysis are so limited as to prevent further typological development. However, sufficient material is available with respect to one particular group within the general supporting actor category. The group includes ASTA staff officers.

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[2] This listing of types of statistical data and opinion required by school board negotiating committees is neither exhaustive, nor does it imply that these items are considered in their entirety before school boards express commitment to particular bargaining positions. Quite to the contrary, the observer's field notes contain repeated comment upon the apparently cavalier approach taken to collective bargaining strategy which deteriorates and becomes more reactive as bargaining continues.

In many respects, the supporting actor constitutes the antithesis of that represented by the star performer type. Whereas the latter cultivates personal visibility, the actor cast in the supporting role operates in the face of pressure that exerts a strain toward anonymity. In the first place, tasks such as information retrieval and cost calculation on salary and contract proposals generally, which comprise much of the supporting actor's work are relatively routine and unspectacular. Secondly, the nature of the business upon which the supporting actor's advice is sought is such that the star performer's or the bargaining table spokesman's credibility would be jeopardized, should the matter be generally conceded that the substance of their expertise derives from the former's counsel. These forces are buttressed by ASTA policy that places a premium on service (which sometimes borders upon servility) from its staff officers.

The supporting actor, unlike counterparts employed in the ATA, has relatively less career experience with education from a classroom teacher perspective, and instead, is more closely allied to a business or administrative background. Such is not to imply that the supporting actor's labour relations orientation is totally management oriented in the traditional sense of the word. Contrary to popular stereotypes of management representatives as "hard nosed" dealers intent upon teacher exploitation, these individuals espouse humanistic work organization principles.

On the other hand, genuine concern for employee welfare, does not obscure the supporting actor's concern for school board negotiating excellence. In many instances the supporting actor is more astute in this respect than those for whom service is provided. The supporting actor remains relatively more alert to the province-wide political dimension of collective bargaining. Again, out of this awareness is derived the motive for broaching matters with trustees in such a manner as to have them explore and arrive at fuller understanding of their decisions' implications.

This role requires that the supporting actor develop a rapport with those in the provincial government and the ATA whose actions bear directly on school board collective bargaining fortunes. As was alluded in a previous chapter, these channels have been disrupted in recent years as a consequence of the rapid rate of staff turnover in ASTA Economic Services. Although enmity which traditionally has characterized relations between the ASTA and the ATA is indicated in Economic Services personnel's predisposition to oppose the latter as a matter of principle on virtually all fronts, there are instances where wariness gives way in the face of a 'philosophical' acceptance of the rival association's employees. This acceptance extends to respect for their bargaining astuteness as well as their need to win settlements acceptable to the teachers. In most instances, it also encompasses recognition of the advantage of dealing with individuals whose credibility and personal integrity hinge upon a demonstrated capacity to honour commitments made in the course of formal and informal negotiation. Ethics notwithstanding, perceived ATA 'victories' such as school board contract concessions or influence wielded in the political arena to the ASTA's detriment, generate considerable disgruntlement for the supporting actor. Generally therefore, the intrinsic rewards derived from playing a role that complements the lead performers in school board collective bargaining barely match the job's heavy demands. The role is personally taxing because of competing demands upon time, extensive travel commitments, and susceptibility to criticism rather than recognition. Many of these negative components also relate to the gladiator ideal type. The supporting actor is denied however, much of the satisfaction that the gladiator may acquire from viewing a collective agreement as tangible evidence of task accomplishment.

The Gladiator

In classical antiquity, among those who engaged in combat for public entertainment were paid freemen. To this group of mercenaries the term 'gladiator' applied; the label was also utilized in order to identify slaves or captives of the state. For the purpose of the dramaturgic analogy, gladiator can be used to differentiate between two actor categories. The gladiator category does not include those who feature prominently in the collective bargaining affairs of a school board as part of daily trustee mandate or in accordance with usual administrative responsibility. It may describe those who render service for a fee. Within the latter category, the gladiator designation applies to several kinds of hirelings. For example, some jurisdictions follow the practice of recruiting the services for a fee, of lawyers who specialize as bargaining table spokesmen, whether in the public or private sector. Business and management consulting firms have also accepted this type of assignment for certain school boards. School board administrators who negotiate on behalf of the organization are also classed as gladiators. Yet another form of remuneration for arguing a school board's case at the bargaining table, is the system of chargebacks implemented by the ASTA where its staff officers render this service. In addition to regular annual membership fees, the board that requests and receives the services of an ASTA staff officer as its spokesman is required to reimburse the Association.

The following account of gladiator ideal type characteristics is substantially based on ASTA staff officers' bargaining table experience. However, conversation with individuals located within other categories and printed material documenting their experience, indicates considerable similarity in the nature of experience of all who render this service.[3] Furthermore, the parallels between that observed in the relationship between gladiators and their principals on the one hand, and that described by Walton and McKersie as constituting intra organizational bargaining (1965) on the other, are extremely close.

In the process of securing a collective agreement with teachers on behalf of a school jurisdiction, the gladiator must accomplish reconciliation of frequently diverse interests. In the first place, teacher proposals are usually at variance with that which school jurisdictions are prepared to accept. Secondly, the gladiator must take account of the school board's bargaining position on all items that may potentially be brought to the table for negotiation. This accounting involves assessment not only of minimal and maximum acceptability of proposals on particular issues, but also degrees of acceptability in terms of trade-offs as well as insight on shifts of opinion within the negotiating committee as bargaining proceeds. The gladiator plays a crucial role in resolving differences within the trustee caucus.

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[3] Of all categories, scrutiny of the performance by members of the legal profession was most superficial. One member of this group was interviewed on a topic which only marginally concerned his task and experience as chief negotiator. Other accounts of the difficulties which they face in providing service for school boards were provided by those who have worked with lawyers on these assignments. Finally, a transcript of the proceedings of the meeting in 1973 of the Canadian Bar Association (Alberta Branch) at which negotiation techniques were the subject of discussion also contains specific reference to this school board collective bargaining experience.

Organizing the negotiating committee. The gladiator may strive for certain ideal conditions in the relationship which must be forged with a negotiating committee. Procedural format must be clearly delineated and understood before commencement of bargaining with teachers. The gladiator, for example, tries to impress upon the committee the importance of confidentiality. Associated with this is the recognition that publicity information be channelled through a designated committee source over which the leader in negotiations maintains strict control. While a relatively large trustee caucus may be tolerated, the rigours of the bargaining situation demand creation of a close knit cadre from within the larger group. Maximum effectiveness hinges upon specialization. Such specialized roles include minute keeper, resources person, scout or observer, and perhaps confidant. Bargaining table discipline is important to the chief negotiator. Confusion as to that the gladiator's sole authority to argue the principal's case and to register commitments endangers his effectiveness. Ideally, committee member prerogatives with respect to ratification or rejection may be exercised in caucus, but not at the bargaining table. Prior to bargaining sessions the gladiator requires a clear assessment of the principal's priorities with respect to the proposed collective agreement.

Those who bargain on behalf of school boards, for the most part are reconciled to satisfactory (and sometimes less-then-satisfactory) relationships in the areas outlined. Secrecy maintenance is the bane of their existence. Not uncommonly, the chief negotiator finds the board's bargaining position undermined by trustees who release privileged information.[4] Sources of these 'leaks' are manifold. By nature, some trustees seem compelled to keep colleagues or others informed. The joviality and conviviality of social functions in which both teachers and trustees participate enhances the danger that confidences will be breached. These functions may be viewed positively in the context of relationship games when the objective is to placate the opposition. Nevertheless, they constitute an eminient danger if the participants fail to recognize that an information game is proceeding apace. The gladiator must also reckon with members in the negotiation committee who adhere to the principle of open lines of communication with constituents, especially when a strike exists. Finally, the issue of information control is but one area over which the star performer and the gladiator find themselves in potential conflict. To the former, control over press releases constitutes an important base for enhanced visibility as well as a means for maintaining control that otherwise would be tenuous in an area where expertise is insufficient to sustain authority.

Perception of the contest. This study's nature and scope lacks sophistication necessary for formulation of typologies that delineate personality and psychological characteristics. Typically the gladiator appreciates the nature of collective bargaining as constituting a continuing ritual. The contract is perceived as being essentially an economic agreement, but the gladiator is astute in assessing the political, social, and psychological dimensions of bargaining.

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[4] Equally damaging to a bargaining position is the circulation of statements which, though not on items of a confidential nature, have the effect of inflaming emotions on bargaining issues. While not malicious in original intent, carelessly worded and off-hand remarks, by trustees and administrators can become grossly distorted and exaggerated by rumour and press publicity.

The gladiator, moreover, appreciates the integral role which impression management plays in the collective bargaining process. Comprising something more than affectation, impression management is employed by the gladiator as part of a repertoire of bargaining skills. Its flexible use constitutes the basis for success in negotiations. Two lawyers notable for their involvement in teacher-school board negotiations, elaborate on the importance of posturing.

> There is obviously a great deal of posturing and a highly ritualistic attitude in collective bargaining. . . . It is a system that to a degree works. It is a slow and gradual process of getting together over a number of meetings and very often the opening positions are . . . quite unrealistic. It would be highly unusual if a trade union didn't open negotiations with large perhaps unrealistic wage demands, but only those untutored and uneducated in the field are ever taken in by those. (Proceedings of the Alberta Chapter of the Canadian Bar Association 1973:268-269)

This gladiator continues, elaborating on other rituals which, when executed with skill, contribute to the ultimate goal of agreement formation.

> To go back to posturing and ritualistic attitudes: there has been the odd occasion when an ashtray has been lifted from the bargaining table and propelled violently across the room at the head of an employer. That has happened . . . and there are other good things about the technique.
>
> There is of course the usual thing . . . the walk out. It has achieved as one could imagine a high degree of dramatic presentation in collective bargaining. At some impasse of course, one or the other--it may be the employer or it may be the trade union--will gather up their papers and brief cases and slam out; preferably wordlessly, that's rather important. (Proceedings of the Alberta Chapter of the Canadian Bar Association 1973:269)

Another spokesman whose experience with school board collective bargaining is considerable outlined, in the following excerpt, his perception of the school trustee's ceremonial role.

> In collective bargaining there should be only one spokesman. I have a little rule of thumb. If anybody talks out of turn he better get the hell out of that room. . . . I would not recommend that directors of a company, school board members, or hospital board members be anywhere near the negotiating room. I think that they should give instructions, set policy and guidelines, but professional negotiators should remain professional negotiators.
>
> There is a ritual dance in labour negotiations, and I don't see any easy way to get away from the ritual dance. (Proceedings of the Alberta Chapter of the Canadian Bar Association 1973: 272-273)

For the gladiator the major difficulty may not be so much concerned with excluding the school trustees from this central facet of the collective bargaining action, as it is one of imposing some limits upon the numbers who assert the right to sit at the bargaining table. Rituals and face saving devices, surround the gladiator's relationships with school board members as well as those involved in the teacher contract deliberations.

Credibility with other protagonists. The gladiator's esteem within a peer group of bargaining table spokesmen hinges substantially upon demonstrated capacity to adhere to tacitly understood conventions. Trust is crucial. Credibility can be irretrievably compromised where informal or quasi-formal agreements are breached. A second factor involves that of mutual empathy. The gladiator bargains with an awareness of the demands and expectations of a supporting negotiating committee and larger employing body. Equally serious is the gladiator's capacity to recognize that a counterpart must also make accommodations with his principals. The awareness influences conduct beyond the realm in which offensive strategy is calculated. The dynamic is such that total destruction of the credibility or the career of the other remains a strategy of highly dubious value to the gladiator. While such an achievement might reap success out of the creation of an aura of ruthlessness and invulnerability, the bargaining process involves such delicate complexities that, in the long run at least, coercion when mounted with this intensity becomes counterproductive. Consequently, the respective negotiators learn to respect the other's organizational responsibilities. They build in to their relationship the capacity for graceful victory, retreat, and face-saving.[5] Underlying and extending beyond the foregoing is a spirit of gamesmanship. Its elements have much in common with the four types elaborated by Lyman and Scott (1970). Finally, the gladiator devotes attention to reconciling personal predisposition in a particular situation with the various bargaining postures encountered during interaction with the school board and teachers.

Personal predisposition is comprised of several interrelated elements. In the first place, personal style is important. This arises from within the individual gladiator's personality and psychological make-up and is closely related to individual perception of the nature of the collective bargaining process. Secondly, the chief negotiator brings to the situation a residue of experience and reflection which underlies a unique perception on that which would be personally acceptable in a collective agreement. Thirdly, the residue of experience and reflection may yield an understanding of that which is possible in particular circumstances. Teacher determination, public opinion, the dynamics of conciliation, and public policy generally, may vary overtime and between situations. The relationship that the gladiator establishes with the school board whose interest is represented at the bargaining table is therefore, very much a negotiated interest. The latter encompasses much more than specific bargaining table items.[6] For one trustee, this constitutes a phenomenon that would diminish if the overwhelming proportion of negotiators were not male. She is scornful of the approach which males allegedly follow in collective bargaining. She illustrates her point by citing the case of a male colleague in her school board's negotiating committee. "To John this is just a big game. The other men see it the same way too. Women wouldn't be bothered to take such time and waste so much money in game playing." (Field Notes: January 30, 1974)

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[5] The continuous nature of the bargaining relationship between the school boards and the teachers is such that the need for observance of this convention arises regardless of the specific identities of the chief negotiators, and whether the same two individuals engage in bargaining during consecutive or subsequent bargaining rounds.

Many male as well as many female trustees undertake only marginal involvement in the collective bargaining affairs of their respective school boards. Impatience with "game playing" may provide partial explanation for their limited involvement. Examination of this group as a collectivity indicates however, that other factors operate to exclude trustees in large numbers from frontstage starring roles in the collective bargaining spectacle. This collectivity is typified in theatrical terms as comprising the chorus.

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[6] More often than not, the main focus of negotiation between gladiator and principal occurs within the realm of interaction between the former on the one hand, and on the other, either the negotiation committee or star performers who dominate the negotiation committee. Consequently the terms 'school board' and 'school jurisdiction' are used as forms of literary convenience and are not precise in some situations described.

The Chorus

As exemplified, particularly in the earliest Greek drama forms, the chorus comprises individuals in the performing group whose comment is sporadic, and whose physical presence is obvious only at certain times. This type of participation resembles that played by the majority of school trustees in collective bargaining. Such does not imply nevertheless, that the chorus' role is unimportant. Nor should it suggest that the school trustees' participation in collective bargaining be more substantive. The chorus and the trustee roles are important constituents in their respective spectacles. Typical chorus-like participation by school trustees is describable in terms of extent and nature of involvement.

Extent of chorus involvement. Potentially, negotiations could totally consume the energies of school trustees to the exclusion of other demands inherent in the office. On the other hand, minimum collective bargaining participation would require that a trustee register a vote at board meetings where memorandum of agreement with teachers is subject to ratification. Typically, chorus collective bargaining involvement approximates more closely the latter than the former.

For several reasons, the chorus places collective bargaining involvement at a relatively low rank in its hierarchy of duties. First, unless a school trustee is retired, semi-retired, or otherwise of independent means,[7] only a limited amount of time is available for performance of trusteeship generally. Non-vocational interests (including family responsibilities) also force curtailment. That is to say, many school trustees also face other civic commitments. Illustrative of this phenomena is the diary ritual that constitutes an important part of trustee assemblies. When future meeting dates are discussed, diaries are invariably produced revealing substantial time blocks committed to events such as hospital board, municipal council, service club, ratepayer, and community meetings.

Time considerations are not however, solely accountable for the relatively limited chorus collective bargaining involvement. The procedure itself lacks appeal. Politically, it is particularly threatening at election time. Effective collective bargaining moreover, does not guarantee popularity with the constituency. On the one hand a good contract from the board's fiscal perspective may intimidate teachers into political action at the polls. On the other hand, a salary contract that placates teachers may precipitate a ratepayer revolt.

To the altruistic chorus member, the adversary relationship implied in the salary bargaining process is distasteful emotionally. In this domain there is little to rival the appeal inherent in other facets of trusteeship more closely identifiable with the children's well-being and community service. Also at the emotional level are factors originating in the complexity of collective bargaining itself. While the latter are bewildering, questions pertaining to operation of a local school are more readily perceived, understood, and mastered. Evidence of achievement and progress are also more readily discernable to the chorus' satisfaction in these areas of local and immediate interest.

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[7] In rural jurisdictions, seasonal factors are also important. At times of intense agricultural and pastoral activity school board business can be conducted only with considerable sacrifice. However, during the "off season" some trustees have ample time to permit participation as star performers, gladiators, and supporting actors.

Nature of involvement. Typical of chorus comment regarding bargaining involvement is the frequently encountered response: "You should really be talking to Mr. X. He's our man who's really up on these matters." Social conversation on the subject is neither penetrating nor prevalent when considered in relation to other items discussed. Attendance at ASTA Labour Relations seminars is usually large, but as is also the case at other Association functions, the chorus witnesses reports and addresses on collective bargaining while effecting a posture of polite restraint. This type of detachment stands in sharp contrast to animated debate engendered by such topics as school bus transportation, school facility use, school building program restrictions, and snow clearance on school bus routes.

The chorus' function is not entirely that of the 'rubber stamp' for negotiating committee endeavours. Characteristically, it demands an accounting for instance, when protracted negotiations provoke outcry in the community. Its members insist that the board should be "fair" in paying teachers "reasonable" salary increases if it has the money. Furthermore, a strike or impending strike by teachers is also guaranteed to arouse chorus interest in the performance of star performers and gladiators, as well as their supporting cast. That this type of intervention mirrors pressures which the chorus encounters in the community-at-large, is indicated by responses of trustees and administrators on the study's opinion survey.[8] Seventy per cent of respondents in the six jurisdictions surveyed, expressed agreement that "Only when a strike is imminent or actually occurs, do members of the public express concern to school trustees about collective bargaining."

In five jurisdictions where chorus reaction to a memorandum of agreement (then being presented for endorsement) was observed, debate preceding the ratification vote was minimal. The chorus registered assent in a spirit of resignation and stoic acceptance. This type of acquiesance may be attributed to disinterest, lack of understanding, or deliberate disassociation. On the other hand, when the strategic location of the chorus in relation to the collective bargaining action is considered, its response is not altogether surprising. Remarks appended to the survey instrument entitled Reasons for Accepting the Memorandum of Agreement, illustrate this point.

> Recognition that the memorandum of agreement represents many weeks of hard bargaining and is therefore likely to be a realistic position. It is unlikely that minor changes can be effected now, so we are dealing with an overall position.

The chorus relies upon the negotiation committee for information. Although the latter is formally responsible to the board for its mandate, its access to privileged information places it in a strategically powerful position. Only with some audacity may a chorus participant continue for any length of time to pry beyond the information which the committee spokesman elects to reveal. Such an inquisitiveness can readily be inferred (to the chorus member's embarrassment) as a challenge to the negotiation committee's competence. Moreover, the need for confidentiality can be, and is cited, by negotiating committee members as rationale for restricting bargaining table reports to generalities rather than specifics. Observation at five meetings in which separate jurisdictions endorsed a memorandum of agreement, reveals that information filtering continues even at the ultimate stage.

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[8] Details are provided in the Appendix, chapter one and chapter three.

The chorus, prior to these endorsement meetings, received only the most general verbal information on the memorandum. The main detail provided in advance was information on prospective salary percentage increases and their broad budgetary implications. Details provided at final meetings varied from a document containing the wording of new clauses to a verbal report only of new clauses that the negotiating committee spokesman thought might be of "interest". Field notes reveal the superficial nature of information and the type of chorus response.

> Spokesman: I'm not happy with the settlement . . .
> it was the best we could do . . . .
> I'll give you some highlights on the
> grid. These are the mins. and maxs.
> on the 4th year.
> (Discussion of implications of enlarged increments as
> a result of 'across the board percentage increases'.)
>
> Trustee: What will happen if we don't accept.
>
> Spokesman: Things will probably snowball to a strike.
> The teachers have accepted this . . . .
> Last year we did better than the counties outside
> the region.
>
> Co-Spokesman: This time it was the south Alberta region
> that buggered it up for us.
> (Field Notes: May 14, 1974)

In this instance, following mention of the grid, the chorus was treated to a general overview of other clauses. Details were passed over with comments such as, "If you want more specific information on principals' allowance, . . .?" (no response) "Special subject area allowances? You're not too interested in that." (no response) "There's quite a bit on sick leave. I won't elaborate though." (No reaction) "How would you like me to read the Maternity Leave clause?" (Some jocularity) "Well, there was some Human Rights legislation that we had to take into account." (Negotiating committee alternate: "They're gonna get it anyway, so what's the difference? The clause was passed over.) "I didn't cover all of this (memorandum). I thought that you'd be interested in those parts. We will get you copies after ratification[9] if you want copies of this." (Secretary Treasurer interjects: "We don't need copies.")

Although proceedings were not exactly duplicated at the other observation sites, superficiality was obvious. At several meetings proceedings were disrupted by trustees leaving and returning to the meeting at intervals. Questions were left unanswered because the bargaining table spokesman was not in attendance. The major consolation for the chorus seemed to be that the agreement had taken less time to negotiate (5 months) than had been the case in previous years.

General bargaining orientation. Collective bargaining is accepted by members of the chorus as an appropriate medium of interaction between school boards and teachers. For example, in the study survey only ten out of the seventy respondents expressed disagreement with the statement, "Teachers should have the right to bargain collectively." Less unanimity was registered over the matters upon which collective bargaining should be sanctioned. For instance, 58.6 per cent expressed agreement that "salary matters only" should be decided at the bargaining table. Meanwhile, 30 per cent endorsed bargaining upon "any items not covered by law." Perhaps not unexpectedly, the trustees and administrators were not generally favourably disposed toward allowing teachers the right to strike. On this item 27.1 per cent asserted "strong disagreement", while another 42.9 per cent indicated less strong opposition. Only 22.9 per cent were in favour. Moreover, in situations where strikes do in fact occur, the trustees and administrators almost unanimously supported the Minister of Labour's exercise of power to secure termination. Only five individuals opposed this notion. On the other hand, another form of Ministerial intervention during the course of teacher strikes was regarded with considerable approbation. Approximately two-thirds of respondents opposed the Minister of Education's action during two previous teacher strikes where provincial grants normally allocated for teacher salary payment were withheld from strike bound school boards.[10]

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[9] In this SAA each director has power to vote ratification. The report to the board, in a strict technical sense, was not a necessary prelude for his vote on the memorandum of agreement. However, each director following the same practice of securing his board's endorsement.

The extent to which the chorus favours the existing collective bargaining procedure in Alberta is difficult to typify. In conversation, as well as during meetings some school trustees volunteer the opinion that there exists an inexorable trend toward provincial level bargaining. Many assert that such an eventuality will be fortuitous. They are rivalled by others who perceive this as something to be resisted as the ultimate threat to local school board integrity. The latter point of view is one actively promoted by the ASTA. The invitation to the keynote speaker for its 1973 Labour Relations Seminar, for instance, expressly requested that the visitor from Saskatchewan advise Alberta trustees of the perils involved in accepting his province's the bi-level concept. (Field Notes: December 11, 1973).

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[10] Of the respondents, fewer than five might be typified as 'star performers.' Their responses have not been differentiated from the others for purposes of this simple frequency statistical summary.

Teachers and trustees were asked as part of an ATA study (ATA Research Monograph #22: November, 1973) to indicate their response to the proposition, "Present negotiations on teachers' salaries should be replaced by provincial negotiations." Only 16 per cent of teachers registered agreement. Agreement registered by the 53 trustees sampled however was significantly in excess of this when measured statistically at the .01 level. Two items in the current study's opinion survey sought to broach the issue concerning trustee preference for local or provincial collective bargaining. Respondents were asked to register agreement or otherwise with the statement, "School boards and teachers should negotiate locally without assistance or advice from A.T.A. or A.S.A.T.A.." Opinion was almost equally divided. Affirmative responses comprised 44.3 per cent of the total while 48.6 per cent expressed disagreement. The substantial difference arose with those registering "strong" disagreement with the local concept as distinct from those indicating "strong" agreement. The former comprised 20 per cent of the responses, while the latter amounted to 12.9 per cent. Another item attempted to elicit a measure of the trustees' satisfaction with the existing perception of the balance between local as distinct from provincial control over board collective bargaining. In response to the statement, "The A.S.T.A. should have more power to control the way school boards conduct collective bargaining," almost half the respondents expressed agreement. However, 8.6 per cent and 30 per cent asserted "strongly disagree" and "disagree" respectively. By comparison with responses for other items the percentage of those expressing neutrality, 12.9 per cent, was relatively high.[11]

SUMMARY

Where collective bargaining is presumed to resemble onstage theatrical performance, four types of participation by school board personnel are identifiable. Because their performance characteristics parallel those manifested by particular individuals or groups associated with dramatic portrayal, these four ideal types are labelled for illustrative purposes, star performers, supporting actors, gladiators, and chorus. The description provided for each ideal type constitutes an amalgam of characteristics, not all of which can be associated with any particular individual school trustee or board employee. Each instead, comprises elaboration on an analytic construct.

Each ideal type form is developed on the basis of the extent and nature of participation in collective bargaining in the first instance. Secondly, each has a unique orientation toward collective bargaining and performance of the particular role assumed. Finally, for each ideal type there exists a set of strategic constraints with which the actor must cope in developing convincing performance.

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[11] On only two other items was "neutral" checked by respondents with a frequency equalling 12.9 per cent. The first concerned the question of scope of the collective agreement, and the second involved estimation of public interest and concern over school board collective bargaining.

As their title suggests, star performers are visible in most facets of ASTA activity. They hold key office in the ASTA Executive Council and/or Economic Council. They participate in the Association's daily operations through frequent visits to its headoffice, or through telephone conversations with ASTA staff officers. These actions serve to expose them to current information that is vital to their effective collective bargaining participation. Star performers do not necessarily have to undertake speaking roles at the bargaining table. Many other public functions sponsored by the ASTA, municipalities, and school boards provide their need to stand in the limelight. Moreover, the star performers assume responsibility for reporting collective bargaining information to their respective school boards and to the press. They dominate trustee caucuses and exercise considerable control over ASTA staff officer activity.

The staff officers comprise a major component in the supporting actor category. Considerable discrepancy exists between their desired collective bargaining involvement and that which the situation and the star performers allow. The latter refuse to be "upstaged". Consequently, the supporting actor is relegated to performance of tasks which are crucial but are relatively routine and unspectacular. These include such activity as collecting and disseminating information, as well as acting as resource person during actual bargaining. The supporting actor manifests a relatively enlightened approach to the bargaining process and to employer-employee relations. Frequently however, these sentiments are submerged by the need to strike politically expedient compromises with trustees as well as in the face of ATA pressume. The star performers' presence is not the sole constraint upon the supporting actor. The latter's effectiveness is also undermined by a general crisis of credibility and confidence which the ASTA confronts in its relations with school boards generally. This obstacle prevents the star performer from securing roles within which ability can be demonstrated. It also creates an aura of insecurity and ambiguity which surrounds the supporting actor's employment with the ASTA.

The gladiator's collective bargaining involvement is focused at the bargaining table where he negotiates with the ATA. Service is performed for a fee, except for certain instances where a salaried school board employee is assigned negotiation responsibility. The gladiator demonstrates philosophical acceptance with respect to the ritualized nature of the bargaining process itself. This entails a measure of detachment from problems immediately confronting the school board for which he/she is speaking. The gladiator also recognizes, and makes accommodation for the situation in which the opposing gladiator must operate during the course of negotiations. That is to say, each gladiator faces constraints inherent in the relationship between self on the one hand, and the negotiating committee on the other. With school trustees in particular, a need for confidentiality and disputes over decision making prerogatives, create difficult problems for the gladiator.

The school trustee who is far-removed from the focal point of collective bargaining action resembles a member of the chorus in ancient Greek drama. Most school trustees may be classified in this category. Trustees have official bargaining responsibilities to fulfill. They designate the individuals who represent the school board as a negotiating committee. They may also exercise the right to cast a vote on contract ratification. However, unless bargaining deteriorates to an impasse, chorus interest is minimal. This relative indifference may stem partly from personal preference for other facets of the educational enterprise. On the other hand, the chorus is placed at considerable disadvantage. Collective bargaining logistics make communication of current information to the chorus relatively difficult. Moreover, star performers may exercise considerable discretion in filtering the information that the chorus receives. Also, because its capacity for discretionary action over contract details is limited, little incentive exists for an alert stance by the chorus on collective bargaining affairs. In other words, the chorus receives a contract for ratification only after lengthy bargaining table interaction with the ATA. The chorus faces the prospect of either totally rejecting or totally accepting a memorandum of agreement. With such narrow scope for choice, the chorus usually abides by its negotiating committee's recommendation. The environment thus created does not encourage individual chorus members to participate intensively in collective bargaining matters.

CHAPTER IX

GAME ANALYSIS OF BACKSTAGE PERFORMANCES

"Strips" and the Game Framework

To this point, attention has focused upon characteristics of major participants, as well as conditions surrounding the collective bargaining spectacle's presentation. One further task remains, namely that of description and analysis respecting interaction that actually occurs within the spectacle itself.

The recording technique, and also, the conceptual framework upon which description and analysis is based, require prior explanation. Two fundamental terms that require elucidation are "strips" and "game theoretical framework". The first is most clearly explicated by Erving Goffman (1974), while the latter is propounded by Lyman and Scott (1970) who acknowledge an intellectual debt to Goffman in its presentation.

In neither instance does the utilization of "strips" and the "game theoretical framework" in this chapter purport to constitute comprehensive test of their respective conceptual merits. The enterprise is essentially exploratory and partial. The authors themselves concede, that their thinking on these matters is formative. With regard to "strips", Goffman (1974:15) observes:

> I have culled them over the years on a hit-or-miss basis using principles of selection mysterious to me which, furthermore, changed from year to year and which I could not recover if I wanted to.

Also, Lyman and Scott (1970:29) acknowledge the possibility of flaws in their game-theoretical framework. They present it as a "tentative re-thinking (of mathematical game approaches), bringing together theoretical and empirical models."

Moreover, the nature of field research by which data for this study was collected precludes exhaustive interaction analysis. In the first place, the single observer operating in a highly sensitive interaction field can record only a fragment of the action. Secondly, considerable selectivity is necessitated because the study's broad perspective imposes constraints on the space that can be devoted to reporting all dimensions.

Nevertheless, strip selection for this study has not been arbitrary. The three most general categories of action--between offstage participants, between actors onstage, and between the former and the latter--are differentiated. Offstage interaction is afforded the greatest prominence. Partly, this may be attributed to the influence of the observer's vantage point. On the other hand, it also reflects the extent to which events witnesses from several vantage points, served to impress upon the observer the significance of this action for the total spectacle and its outcomes. Thirdly, the choice of strips is governed by a decision to accentuate one aspect of Lyman and Scott's (1970) game framework, namely, the exploitation game. The other three categories--face games, relationship games, and information games--are relegated to positions where perusal and analysis is less exhaustive. Where they are the subject of reference the reader will find the general definitional outline which follows elaboration on the use of strips, useful in gauging particular meanings.

Strips: Bases for Rendering Organized Accounts

The nature of personal experience and the organizational principles upon which individuals formulate their definitions of reality is the dominant theme in Frame Analysis (Goffman 1974). Commencing with "bracketed experiences" or "encounters", the author proceeds to analysis of the action contained therein. Of these activity segments, or "strips", Goffman (1974:10) writes:

> The term 'strip' will be used to refer to any arbitrary slice or cut from the stream of ongoing activity; including here sequences of happenings, real or fictive, as seen from the perspective of those subjectively involved in sustaining an interest in them. A strip is not meant to reflect a natural division made by the subjects of inquiry or an analytic division made by students who inquire; it will be used only to refer to any raw batch of occurrances (of whatever status in reality) that one wants to draw attention to as a starting point for analysis.

The use of strips in this chapter is not entirely that employed by Goffman in Frame Analysis. Whereas, in focussing upon individual experience, Goffman utilizes relatively condensed "cuts", the experiences related in this chapter with respect to interaction at organizational levels are comparatively protracted.

In other words that which Goffman attempts in the domain of individual activity, is adapted in this chapter to the study of social organization and social structure. Licence for departure from orthodoxy is sought on the same grounds as those which Goffman himself articulates, namely (1974:10):

> My treatment of these initial terms is abstract and I am afraid that the formulations provided are crude indeed by the standards of modern philosophy. The reader must initially bestow the benefit of mere doubt in order for us both

> to get to matters that, I feel, are less dubious.

In other words, because the collective bargaining process itself, particularly in the public sector, has defied penetration by traditional orthodoxies, this relatively ad hoc descriptive approach may have to be tolerated, at least until new orthodoxies are forthcoming.

The three strips elaborated in the latter half of this chapter are the documentary evidence upon which analysis is based. The analysis itself requires a conceptual framework that accommodates the notion of role performance outlined in previous description of the study's theatrical metaphor. That is to say, interaction between participants is believed to involve various degrees of extemporaneous performance. A framework that conceptualizes interaction as games (Lyman and Scott 1970) is appropriate to the type of assignment where human conduct is presumably forged by individuals who are simultaneously free and yet constrained.[1] The next section is devoted to an overview of one particular game model developed for the purpose of explaining this paradox.

A Typology of Games

Lyman and Scott (1970:37-63) have elaborated a structure within which systematic accounts of stable social action are possible. It comprises four games--exploitation, face, relationship, and information--that are "functionally independent, empirically overlapping, but analytically distinct" (1970:37). These four games which are presumably identifiable in any given encounter are presented below as capsules of that described in A Sociology of the Absurd (Lyman and Scott 1970:37-63). Because relatively greater emphasis in this chapter is placed upon exploitation games, this facet of the typology is presented in somewhat greater detail at the conclusion of the summary.

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[1] Silverman (1971:210) outlines the strengths and shortcomings associated with the conceptual approach that equates interaction with game play.

Face games. The face game involves efforts to realize a valued identity. Two basic tasks are involved namely, prevention of damage to one's own or another's identity on the one hand, or on the other, restoration of esteem. The game involves at least two parties who 'take turns' in a serialized encounter that involves three phases. These phases include commencement, playing time and termination. Initially, for whatever reason, a face game commencement requires that a participant perceives (and responds with a challenge to) an affront to self esteem. Following the challenge playing time involves series of counter-challenges. These moves permit the offending party to negotiate peace with the offended. Face can be salvaged by a variety of strategies including, conciliatory offerings, compensation, penance, or self-punishment. A face game terminates when the offending party makes overt recognition of gratitude that amicability has been restored.

Relationship games. These games eventuate where participants work to maintain, attenuate, or terminate mutual bonds. Either more intimate or more distant relationships may be sought. As is the case with face games, three phases are involved namely, introduction, invitation, and acceptance. Introduction involves a series of identity disclosures in the case of a positive relationship game for the purpose of 'testing out' the recipient with whom a closer relationship is desired. An invitation phase follows. The subject of the initial advances indicates receptivity to the identities that have been disclosed sequentially by the initiator. Invitation suggests moreover, that further revelation is desired, and contains as a sign of 'good faith' an identity disclosure complementing that tendered by the initiator. Following this reciprocal exchange of identities, the game continues with further sequential disclosures until one or the other participant indicates "acceptance" of a given degree of intimacy as sufficient. At that point the game terminates. Withdrawal gambits, similarly sequenced, comprise negative relationship games.

Information Games. Information games overlap all other games largely because knowledge is prerequisite to social life. Also, the extent and nature of information that individuals and groups are willing to betray are integral to exploitive encounters, as well as face and relationship exchanges. Where participants try to conceal or uncover knowledge, information games occur. This type of game has been explained more fully than the others in The Racing Game (Scott 1968) where it is employed as a conceptual tool to provide insight on the social organization of horse racing. Commencement, control moves, covering moves, uncovering moves, and recovering moves comprise the game's five phases.

It commences when one actor realizes that information for which confidentiality is desired, has become the object of search by another. A second phase includes such tactics as scrutiny of clandestine activity, operational code, normative constraints, and regular behaviour. Thirdly, "covers" implemented by the concealer may involve personal behaviour typified by postponement or vacillation, deceptive revelation, or straightforward denial of access to information. When however, the seeker realizes that the concealer is aware of investigation, a new strategy is embarked upon. Of this, Lyman and Scott (1970:61) write:

> As a general strategy, the seeker brackets the person and situation under investigation within an assessment perspective designed to discover just what might be revealed by extraordinary scrutiny.

Recovering moves, the last in the information game sequence, are initiated by the concealer in the event that suspicion arises that extraordinary scrutiny has indeed been successful in piercing a "cover". This deception involves tampering with the "best evidence" that the searcher has acquired.

Exploitation games. This type of game involves parties striving for imperative control over each other, Lyman and Scott (1970:54) assert that these interactions eventuate "on the brink of power relationships." In the exploitation game, individuals or groups engage in thrust and parry, each hoping to win compliance from the other. It is essentially therefore, a phased encounter with a successful outcome for one comprising a situation where, having established a particular frame of meaning, a participant can anticipate "normal" or "natural" acquiescence from the other. However, until the other is prepared to yield compliance the game continues in phases with the would-be exploitee reacting in either of two ways to the exploiter's thrust.

> His attempt may be countermanded by a contradictory or different frame of meaning introduced by the potential exploitee. Or the latter may accept the general structure of meaning introduced by the would-be exploiter, but redefine its specific elements . . . .(Lyman and Scott 1970:55)

Termination occurs also, in situations other than when one or the other party concedes. Avoidance of a proposed compliance frame or a "stand off", albeit temporary, may serve to terminate an exploitation game.

Diagram 1 contains a schematic representation of the basic reward-punishment dichotomy underlying general strategies that exploitation game participants pursue. Appeal addressed in these terms may be addressed to either the internal state of the target, or to that entity's environment. The former aspect of identity includes motivational factors, while the latter dimension concerns factors external to the potential exploitee but which are valued.

DIAGRAM 1

REWARD-PUNISHMENT DICHOTOMY AND
IDENTITY ORIENTED APPEAL

APPEAL DICHOTOMY	ASPECTS OF IDENTITY	
	Situational	Motivational
Positive	Promotion Assistance Cooperation	Predict feeling of self-satisfaction and self-worth
Negative	Deny promotion or demote Obstruction	Predict lowered self-esteem and feeling of well-being

In addition to rewards and punishments a further dimension, associated with situational considerations, is available to the would-be exploiter. That is to say, the would-be exploiter may couch appeal for compliance more in terms of its consequence for an existing relationship, than with regard to its effects on particular entities. For example, an employer having recently "moved up" his salary offer, may argue that previous practice involving sequenced "moves" requires the employees to "move down" on their salary demands. On the other hand, the employees may respond with a counter thrust that, although couched also as a situational-relationship explanation, emphasizes specific characteristics (as distinct from general characteristics) of the situation. In such a response, the employees might assert that since they have already acceded to management requests to drop certain contentious items pertinent to seniority and working conditions, it is incumbent upon the employer to reciprocate with a salary package that is "reasonable" in terms of these specific concessions.

Finally, when inducements (either positive or negative) and situational explanations (either general or specific) prove to be of little avail, one further tactic is available. This involves shifting from a situation-oriented to an identity-oriented appeal. For instance, in the previously cited example, a school board might respond to teacher employees with the claim that any further escalation in the salary package offer will incur the displeasure of rate payers and censure of the provincial government to the extent that required funds will not be forthcoming. For teachers, a parallel for this "hard" identity would be an assertion that they are ready and willing to strike on the issue, having no alternative in view of the Association's sacrosanct objective that requires adequate remuneration as prerequisite to professional status. At the other extreme of the identity hierarchy, each participant may avail itself periodically of "softer" identities that may be tactically efficacious where the exploitation encounter is less competitive or less ferocious.

The remainder of this chapter is devoted to more detailed consideration of the exploitation game and its relevance for analysis of collective bargaining related interaction. Backstage type interaction between the provincial government, the ASTA and the ATA is the focus of observation. Their interaction is documented in three strips. Collectively, these strips incorporate reference to events extending over a period of four and one-half years, terminating in 1975. Each segment is treated in two phases. In each case the first phase comprises elaboration of the strip itself. The second phase of each of the three segments involves exploitation game analysis of the relevant strip.

STRIKING THE PRODUCTION BUDGET

Strip #1: November, 1972 to August, 1973

In November of 1972, several months after school boards and the ATA had commenced negotiations on collective agreements for 1973, the Minister of Education announced regulations governing the second three-year phase of the School Foundation Program Plan.[2] Significant innovations concerned a switch to grant payment on the basis of per-pupil enrolment and a 7 1/2 per cent escalation in grant payments. The latter represented an increase from the previous 6 per cent escalation allowable for 1970, 1971 and 1972. Finally, "soft control" on supplementary requisition replaced the mandatory plebiscite.

ATA and ASTA reactions to the new regulations were recorded. In particular, officials were asked to speculate as to the possible collective bargaining ramifications.

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[2] Designated SFPP in the remainder of this chapter.

> ATA Respondent: Well of course the government statements are really not as much 'out of the blue' as the public might think they are. We had a pretty good indication quite some time ago that in fact the six percent was going to change, and so we went in with our eyes wide open and weren't about to settle anything at six per cent because of the fact that we knew perhaps what the government was going to be doing some time hence. (Interview transcript)

> ASTA Respondent: Now the government at the present time has put in a guideline. Of course it was 6 per cent last year. Now it is 7 1/2 per cent, and this is pretty basically the figure on which school boards talk when they are talking collective bargaining. It doesn't matter how the Minister qualifies his figure now, the mental set has now set--and that is where the figure stands. The teachers are saying at the bargaining table, 'It shall be 7 1/2 per cent!' One of our school authorities associations interpreted the Minister's announcement literally as 7 1/2 per cent and settled at that point--about 7.3 per cent or something. (Interview transcript)

The ATA official was asked, "Can you justify salary demands that go beyond the rate of increase in provincial instructional grants and, if so, have you been successful with these claims at the bargaining table?"

> ATA Respondent: Yes! We can justify it because of the increases that other areas are getting. I mean other endeavours. Other sectors of the economy are getting increases in excess of 7 1/2 per cent. Certainly we can justify it. But the difficulty that we are then faced with is that, in spite of all the justifications we might do to a school board, or might do to a conciliation board, or to a mediator if it got into a strike vote situation or even into a strike--the fact remains that there's the money. That's what the province has given them. And so what we try to do is exceed it by as much as we can. But, quite frankly, we're not too optimistic about ever being able to exceed a government guideline by very much dollars. (Interview transcript)

According to ASTA estimates (Mimeod Document: November 24, 1973), the average province-wide weighted increase in the teachers' salary grid for

1972 was 6.8 per cent. The average teacher salary increase was estimated at 9.2 per cent. The 2.4 per cent "improvement factor" represented cost effect of extra experience and qualification increments accumulated by teachers between 1972 and 1973.

Exploitation game analysis of strip #1. Commencing in 1970, the provincial government had embarked upon a program of retrenchment in school board spending. Compliance had been substantially won by late 1972. Increased liquidity and relatively moderate inflation required that stringent controls be relaxed. In countenancing such a change the province encountered a dilemma. The flow of funds had to be escalated without eroding the effectiveness the government had accomplished in arresting the rate of growth in school board spending. Because teacher salaries comprise such a large proportion of school board expenditures, careless or inept collective bargaining by school trustees posed a tangible threat in this regard. However, because the Minister and Department of Education eschew (publicly at least) responsibility in the salary negotiation sphere, direct intervention to regulate salary increases was precluded.[3]

Consequently, compliance was sought within a general finance frame of meaning where collective bargaining implications were studiously avoided. Salary regulation accusations were hotly denied when raised by school boards and the ATA. The initial thrust, therefore, accentuated situational rather than motivational aspects. It emphasized general relationship characteristics, rather than specific dimensions. Ostensibly, school boards were addressed as partners in the governance of schools, remaining free to exercise local discretion within the collective bargaining realm subject to censure and audit by local ratepayers. Previously, the province had employed a "hard" identity in curtailing school board spending. With this new initiative, retreat to a more moderate identity was attempted as a vehicle with which compliance could be attained. A situational threat was implied for boards who exceeded the new escalation allowance. They continued to risk retribution from local taxpayers on supplementary requisition excesses.

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[3] This illustrates the overlapping nature of games. A face game proceeding apace required that the province take care to demonstrate its commitment to local autonomy in school governance while championing the cause of fiscal responsibility and accountability in education. Thus, provincial intervention to regulate collective bargaining outcomes was not politic as, almost inevitably it would have precipitated a "calling down" by school boards and/or the ATA.

In response to the government thrust, school boards and teachers reacted neither with total compliance nor with total rejection. They cooperated in confining salary and school board spending increases within a zone approximating that inferred in the Minister's SFPP adjustment. But, they modified the context within which their acquiescence was extended. SFPP regulation adjustments were construed as "collective bargaining guidelines". Qualitatively, they were perceived as only slightly less significant than "collective bargaining ceilings." Moreover, both school boards and teachers were reluctant to negotiate the new identity proposed by the provincial authority. As is revealed in subsequent strips, they countered the provincial government's attempt to portray a "soft" image by publicly intensifying and highlighting their association's respective profiles as political interest groups committed to the task of loosening the provincial government purse strings.

Strip #2: September, 1973 to April, 1974

The ATA in particular, let little time elapse before publicizing its initiatives designed to wrest from the provincial government an even greater amount of revenue for education than that allowed under the revised SFPP regulations. For example, it argued that the 7.5 per cent escalation could be countenanced as "reasonable" only in the event that "the rate of inflation can be held to the four per cent level" (*ATA News*: March 31, 1973). In its submission to the cabinet, the Association asserted that, in view of the failure to contain inflation within the four per cent range, an additional five per cent increase in SFPP funding for school boards should have been allowed prior to application of the 7.5 per cent escalation. In the following issue of *ATA News* the Association Executive returned to the attack. Again the ATA construed the provincial government's finance policy as intervention in collective bargaining between school boards and teachers.

> Failing a return to local bargaining, the Conservative Government, *which controls the purse strings*, must face the *other alternative; bargaining directly with teachers.* The price controls imposed on education *when they have not been imposed on any other sector* of the economy, have placed teachers and school boards in a situation that is completely untenable. *ATA News:* April 15, 1973) (Emphasis added)

Continuing, the editorial took the government to task for its alleged duplicity in curbing school board spending freedom on the one hand, while "uttering platitudes of local autonomy and making public relations moves", on the other.

> Either Alberta school boards have local autonomy--which includes fiscal responsibility--or they do not. Either Alberta teachers have bargaining rights or they do not. If they do have bargaining rights, then the government must declare whether teachers can bargain with the holder of the purse

> strings (which Association policy does not favor) or whether they can bargain with their employers without it being made a mockery of.

The ATA reiterated its concern to the Cabinet Committee on Education in June of 1973, and again in the following September. It urged the government to take action to increase the flow of money into the education sector in order to forestall staff cuts that school boards would inevitably have to countenance after agreeing to "the necessary increases in salary levels" (ATA News: September 30, 1973).

Meanwhile, the ASTA through its Economic Council and zone briefings, was preparing school boards for impending bargaining on contracts for 1974. Notwithstanding the political interest group pressures already mentioned, the provincial government made no formal announcement to school boards during September and October that SFPP instructional grants for the subsequent year would be revised. By October one relatively important school board had completed a collective agreement allowing its teachers an 8 per cent grid settlement that would cost the board approximately 11 per cent more than the previous contract. Recorded in field notes pertaining to collective bargaining deliberations by ASTA officials and school trustees during this period, are references to many different facets of impending negotiations. However, there is little evidence reflecting on whether SFPP funds would be increased, or on whether, in cases where settlements exceeded 7.5%, they could be financed. Some tentative discussion occurred over the most appropriate level at which school boards should "hold the line". Trustees expressed trepidation in view of the obvious wealth of the agricultural sector. Nevertheless, little was forthcoming in the form of precise planning and strategy for winning agreement at specific salary levels. Symptomatic of the "let's wait and see" approach was the disinterested reception that school boards rendered the ASTA suggestion that they should attempt to negotiate a differently structured salary grid (Field Notes: September 14, 1973).

On November 5 the Minister of Education addressed school trustees assembled for the ASTA Annual Convention. He reminded them that eight school jurisdictions had been successful in testing the money by-law "soft control" on supplementary requisition. He pointed out moreover, that approximately fifty school boards had been allowed an upward adjustment in supplementary requisition as a result of formal budget review at the Department of Education. Reference to the possibility that SFPP grants would be escalated was not forthcoming. Instead, the Minister took the opportunity to urge school trustees to demonstrate greater responsibility and accountability locally. Specifically with reference to collective bargaining responsibility, he suggested that they commence bargaining earlier than previously had been the case, that they invite teachers to participate in pre-negotiation discussions, and that they avoid unnecessarily protracted bargaining. The latter, he observed, constituted foolhardiness in view of conditions prevailing in inflationary times (Field Notes: November 5, 1973).

Shortly thereafter, in mid-November, the ASTA received from the Deputy-Minister of Education a request for input on the issue of "mid-course" adjustments to SFPP spending regulations. A reply was requested as soon as possible, and by the first week in December at the latest. The ASTA's resources, already substantially committed to collective bargaining work, were strained to produce a response within the relatively brief time frame.[6] A staff officer drafted a reply to the Minister's request. It was presented at the ASTA Economic Council's November 29 meeting. Summing up the document's approach, its author commented:

> Well we want more dollars and cents from an antiquated system. What I think the Minister is saying with this request is, 'The pie is there. Now, how do we split it?' But, I don't think that we've got to accept that. I think we should insist on something like, 'How, or why shouldn't the pie be bigger?' (Field Notes: November 20, 1973)

Not unlike the earlier ATA submission, the document warned the provincial government that the effects of inflation would be such as to make increased salary levels virtually unavoidable, and, without further SFPP revenues, school boards would have no choice but to reduce staff size and increase teacher-pupil ratios. The Economic Council endorsed the draft submission for approval by ASTA Executive Council at its scheduled meeting on December 7, 1973.

Before the ASTA Executive Council had the opportunity to peruse the document (but not before the Minister had met privately with the Association President and Executive-Director) "mid course" SFPP adjustments were announced in the Legislature. On December 5, 1973 the Minister of Education advised MLA's that an additional $4 million would be channelled into school instructional grants from the province. Because allocations to particular school boards were geared to enrolments in different grade categories viz. elementary, junior high, and senior high, the Minister was not able to articulate exactly the percentage increase. He conceded that it would be "in the range of 9 per cent or better" (Edmonton Journal: December 6, 1973).[7]

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[6] As early as 1970 the need for an articulated ASTA finance policy was the subject of reports discussed within the Association. However, only at the time of the deputy minister's request had the Association taken initiatives to explore the possibility of hiring an external finance consultant. Eventually, an offer was made at the end of 1973, but no agreement was completed. During 1974 therefore, finance deliberations were carried on by officers of the Association with only periodic assistance from outside sources.

Within eight days of this announcement the largest SAA finalized an agreement with approximately 1,300 teachers that granted grid salary increases that were, according to press release, "in line with the nine percent school grant increase the Province awarded school boards" (Pincher Creek Echo: January 3, 1974). Its neighbouring SAA also completed a collective agreement with the ATA shortly thereafter and local ratepayers were advised:

> The boards in the Bow Valley School Authorities Association took almost total advantage of the recently announced increase in provincial instructional grants from 7 1/2 to 9 per cent to provide for their teachers.
> (Drumheller Big Country News: February 20, 1974)

The ATA News (January 15, 1974) carried the following comment by the bargaining table spokesman who participated in the first SAA settlement that set the pattern for subsequently negotiated contracts.

> This year, as always, the ghost at the bargaining table was the constraint placed upon additional spending by the provincial government. There is no doubt that the government decision to increase the additional amount of money available came at a propitious time.
> (Emphasis added)

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[7] Immediately, the ASTA circulated a bulletin to member boards advising them to check the net effect of the SFPP revisions in terms of current enrolments, before concluding that their total revenues would increase by 9 per cent. It emphasized that the greatest proportional increase in weighting in the revised formula was with the elementary category, but that many school boards face declining enrolments at that level. (ASTA Draft Bulletin #73-11).

One further case in which the SFPP adjustment influenced the outcome of salary discussions between teachers and school boards, was that involving payment of cost-of-living bonuses to teachers working under two-year term collective agreements. Payment of a 2.5 per cent bonus to Edmonton teachers was explained by one school trustee as a "passing along" of an increase in provincial funding (Edmonton Journal: February 2, 1974).

Exploitation game analysis of strip #2. The ASTA and the ATA pursued similar objectives with regard to SFPP funding during 1973. Both sought provincial government compliance with a frame of meaning in which extra funds from general revenue would be allocated to education. Furthermore, these associations sought to dissuade government from its policy of restriction on supplementary requisitions.

For the most part, their appeal was situational until, at least, the provincial government demonstrated a measure of acquiescence. The inevitability of salary increases was accentuated with the basic cause being cited as a steady rise in inflation. Implied more often than stated was the notion that the government possessed an added responsibility to increase educational funding, in view of its alleged failure to combat inflation. School boards and teachers emphasized impending layoffs, increases in pupil-teacher ratios, declining morale, and deterioration on learning quality, should school boards be required to meet higher payroll costs without extra provincial government assistance. They threatened to publicize these eventualities as consequences of dereliction of responsibility and duty by the governing party.

Further political embarrassment was implied in ATA references to possible inauguration of provincial-level collective bargaining. Its turbulent history as a proposed innovation in Alberta is documented by Odynak (1963). The spectre of collective bargaining between the Department of Education and the ATA threatens untoward political outcomes for the former. The provincial government's traditional means of deflecting public hostility over collective bargaining related inconvenience may be undermined as school board responsibilities diminish. Moreover, the transition threatens to aggravate the government's difficulty in establishing credibility with its commitment to local autonomy for school boards.

Therefore the frame of meaning suggested by the ATA and the ASTA in their public statements was resisted by the Department of Education. It sought to modify elements in their argument, while taking a course of action to which it was predisposed in view of economic conditions then prevailing. In other words, the government had the funds and ample motive to provide extra assistance, but it avoided a response within a frame of meaning that amounted to provincially-granted increases in teacher salaries. On the other hand an acceptance that surrendered essential control on school board spending escalations, was not politic.

The Department of Education proceeded on two fronts. In his speech to school trustees, the Minister emphasized motivational aspects of identity, advising them of the intrinsic satisfaction derivable from energetic and innovative performance of political responsibilities. In subsequent speeches and press comment between January and May of 1974, he continued to implore school board members to "grasp the nettle" at the local level of political activity. In thus doing, he extended the promise of status enhancement to a par with that enjoyed by municipal councillors from whom spending restrictions has been lifted.

Appeal to motivational and situational aspects of school trustee identity was also complemented by the departmental strategy that preceded the Minister's announcement on December 5, 1973. The adversary relationship implied in political interest group activity was diminished in favour of an emphasized consultative relationship. At least, the form of consultation was observed in November of 1973 when the deputy-minister requested input from the ASTA. Simultaneously, ASTA executive personnel were accorded the opportunity to confer personally with the Minister. These gestures also comprised an integral part of face games and relationship games that involved interaction between the ASTA, the ATA, and the Department of Education.

Similar game-like activity also resulted within the ASTA. On December 5th, 1973 the Minister of Education emphasized a frame of meaning other than that which the ASTA and ATA had sought to engender. He paid lip service to the need to compensate school boards for increased costs in school operation. In addition to the importance of maintaining quality education, the Minister payed homage to "input" from constituents while claiming to exercise the government's constitutional mandate for general control in education. In November his welcoming message to participants in the 1973 ASTA Annual Convention he also stressed the importance of positive relationships with school boards. He stated:

> I strongly support the notion of an association of school trustees. By that I mean you are able to respond effectively to local needs and to autonomously make decisions in many areas of responsibility which have been *delegated to school boards by government*. At the same time, I recognize the need for increasing the depth of understanding of appropriate roles *for the Department* and *for school boards* in *cooperatively and equitably* providing the highest possible quality of educational

> service to our province's most important resource, our children.
> (The Alberta School Trustee: October, 1973)
> (Emphasis added)

While teachers and school boards manifested their willingness to contain 1974 salary increases within the range suggested by the SFPP regulation adjustments, they countered with their own definitions of situation and identity.

For example, individuals within the ASTA Executive explained the increases as constituting the outcome of their personal political persuasiveness (Field Notes: December 7, 1973). This claim was subsequently translated into terms which were used to justify the ASTA's value to local school boards. Locally, the regulation change was publicized as a Department of Education response to an ASTA request (St. Paul Journal: January 23, 1974). For its part, the ATA extended appreciation which constituted positive situational reward for the provincial government. Noting that the ATA too had made several requests for increased funding, comment in ATA News: (December 15, 1973) under the by-line "Yes Virginia, there is a Santa Claus . . .", commended the government for its response that "ought to have a beneficial effect on the atmosphere which might prevail at the bargaining tables throughout the province." As more and more settlements were completed without undue conflict, the ATA again displayed its willingness to reward the government with public praise. In the Edmonton Journal (February 6, 1974) for instance, credit was given in the following terms by an ATA staff officer:

> The attitude of many boards seemed to indicate prolonged negotiations. But the increased school grant support from the government

> eliminated some of the problems they were having and made bargaining easier.

In wording its praise, the ATA persisted in its insistence that the provincial authority had become a major identity whose actions profoundly effect annual adjustments to teacher's salaries.

Strip #3: May, 1974 to April, 1975

By the spring of 1974, the ATA was again publicly engaged in the process of pressuring the provincial government to provide school boards with additional revenue to finance teacher salary increases that would be demanded in 1975 contracts (ATA News April 15, 1974). Addressing teachers at the Association's Annual Representative Assembly, the president identified the provincial government as one party whose failure to combat inflation had led to erosion in teacher spending power. Consequently, he argued (ATA News: April 30, 1974), "politicians who have the power to rectify the situation" must be reminded forcefully of the teachers' plight. His message suggested "difficult bargaining days ahead" in the event that no heed was given the teachers.

Meanwhile, the ASTA and ATA began to find common cause in the quest for extra educational funding.[8] The possibility of cooperation between ASTA and ATA in this regard was raised during the ASTA staff's early deliberations on an Association finance policy (Field Notes: April 17,

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[8] The closer liaison, sought by the ASTA president in November of 1973 with municipal governing bodies for purposes of lobbying the government (as well as developing coordinated labour relations policy), had not eventuated. A more successful relationship game is indicated, in the short-run at least, between ASTA and ATA and the Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations.

1974). Yet, optimism was dampened by previous bargaining experience. During the latter part of April, an ATA delegation to the ASTA Finance Conference was conspicuous, not only for its input during the sessions at which its comments served to highlight the two organizations' common fiscal concerns but also, for that which an ASTA official labelled the "surprising friendliness of the ATA boys" (Field Notes: April 24, 1974).

Under the by-line "ASTA, ATA Share School $$ Concerns", The ASTA Leader (May, 1974) announced that, "Alberta school trustees have invited Alberta teachers to share with them efforts to relieve the government imposed restrictions on educational spending." The article reiterated previous ASTA attacks against government's "discriminatory" practice in singling school boards out for spending controls. It predicted that, in a series of projected meetings, table officers of ATA and ASTA who hitherto had ~~confined~~ discussion to exploration of mutual "concerns and interests", would soon direct attention towards action that would "obtain freer financing to maintain the level of Alberta education."

On June 10, 1974, in concert with the Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations, the two associations circulated the first draft of a proposed brief. The Brief to Government on Educational Finance requested removal of supplementary requisition controls on school boards, as well as increased education spending out of provincial general revenue. Cost escalation and quality enhancement considerations were cited as evidence of need for provincial funding. Noteworthy within the brief's "quality" taxonomy were the teacher-related elements (experience, training, motivation, morale, and supply level) that are related, either directly or indirectly, to collective bargaining outcomes.

During May of 1974, the Medicine Hat Public School District agreed to pay its 289 school teachers a salary grid increase of 15 per cent in their 1975 contract. This amounted to an overall 16.03 per cent increase for these teachers (*ATA News*: May 31, 1974), but in the teacher newspaper as well as in the daily press (*Edmonton Journal*: May 25, 1974), the contract was headlined as a 15 per cent increase. The board chairman's comment on the agreement and its budgetary implications indicate evolution in "the rules of the game" in so far as school board role in collective bargaining is concerned.

> (The chairman) feels the one year contract is a generous one, and confesses that *he isn't quite sure where the money will come from* to cover the increased wage bill for 1975. (He) suggests that *perhaps the Department of Education will have to do something in the way of subsidization* if enrolments don't increase and inflation keeps galloping. (*ATA News*: May 31, 1974) (Emphasis added).

This observation echoes sentiments contained in an Edmonton Public School Board official's elaboration on a decision to pay a 2.5 per cent cost-of-living bonus to teachers.

> Where the money will come from he was not altogether sure. He expects increased funds from the provincial government in certain areas, and budget cuts in other areas to account for much of the total. 'As a last resort,' he said, 'We could raise the mill rate.' (*St. John's Edmonton Report*: April 4, 1974)

The ATA Teacher Welfare Coordinator expressed support for this type of school board approach to collective bargaining, stating, "We would be far happier to have the boards settle early, and thus influence what the Minister's announcement will be rather than wait until the announcement is made" (*ATA News*: September 30, 1974).

Although neither the ATA nor the ASTA officials in their public statements attached a particular figure to their respective pleas for revision of SFPP escalation regulations, the tenor of their remarks indicated clear dissatisfaction with anything less than 10 per cent. Direct and oblique reference to 15 per cent as an indicator of a possible settlement trend reappeared from time to time. The spokesman for the Southern Alberta SAA received province-wide attention for advising fellow trustees to pay teachers a salary that "keeps them happy" (Edmonton Journal: June 26, 1974). The press report continued:

> . . . the days of six- or seven-per-cent salary increases for teachers are gone . . . we have to hire a teacher at a price he is happy to work for. . . . I'm not saying to them, 'here is the money bag,' but we do have to be realistic.

With respect to the current 9 per cent SFPP figure, the ATA reminded the Cabinet Education Committee that this escalation figure "does not offer much hope for the conduct of satisfactory negotiations" (The Calgary Herald: September 7, 1974). The source of the "teacher-school board strife" headlined in this press report received elaboration in a subsequent issue of ATA News: (September 30, 1974). An ATA official advised boards against attempting to settle "at a position fixed by the provincial government guidelines around 7.6 per cent as they have done in the past." The spokesman reminded readers that teacher determination had hardened since "other segments of the labor force are coming in with settlements in excess of 15 per cent for a 12-month period."

If events of the previous two years had failed to convince observers that annual adjustment to the SFPP instructional spending regulation would also be forthcoming in 1974, the Minister of Education's actions would have been sufficient of themselves. In April, when addressing the ATA Annual Representative Assembly for example, he predicted that the "unfair backlash" against education would shortly terminate (ATA News: April 30, 1974). The Minister also praised trustees for the excellent record of school board budget surpluses in the previous year. He outlined new directions for diversified educational spending and predicted further "softening" in spending controls, when speaking at the ASTA Finance Conference (Field Notes: April 24, 1974).

Public confirmation that the 9 per cent constraint would be modified was received in October. Unlike the previous year (in which announced revisions received no advanced publicity and evoked only minor press attention) considerable comment and speculation ensued in 1974 when the Minister gave notice that the change was imminent. But as the press report reveals, the Legislature had to wait for precise details.

> . . . he plans to boost funding for the province's school boards by more than the nine per cent originally proposed by the government for next year.
>
> Mr. Hyndman said in an interview that he has not decided how much the hike in grants for all boards will be, but that the figure has to be hiked to match rising costs of running schools. (The Calgary Herald: October 25, 1974)

He also gave notice that his decision on these matters would be announced in his speech, eleven days later, at the ASTA Annual Convention. On November 5, 1974 details of the Minister's address were carried under large headlines in the Edmonton and Calgary daily newspapers. Beneath its byline "School Grants increased Provincial aid hiked 15 per cent" The Calgary Herald (November 5, 1974) for instance, began its account with:

> During a one hour, no-nonsense speech here Monday, Education Minister Lou Hyndman announced that the instructional grant portion of the school foundation program will be hiked by an average of 15 per cent for 1975, while at the same time supplementary requisition ceilings will go up to 15 per cent.

Specifically in the field of collective bargaining, the Minister's message barely deviated from that delivered twelve months previously. He urged school trustees to strive to create a positive bargaining atmosphere. Prenegotiation sessions, early commencement, and avoidance of prolonged bargaining, were all recalled as means for achieving amicable relations with teachers. The Minister also reiterated his contention that school boards should assume full responsibility for collective bargaining, and thus avoid it becoming the responsibility of the provincial government (Field Notes: November 4, 1974).

Representatives of teachers and of school boards expressed guarded acknowledgement that the announcement would provide a measure of fiscal relief. The ATA president however, perceived of the increase as being "marginal" at best (Edmonton Journal: November 5, 1974). She reminded the Minister in a subsequent ATA News issue (November 30, 1974) that education remained fiscally "in a ball park of crisis." This same issue reported the ATA Provincial Executive Council's reaction to the Minister's failure to accept its previous recommendation for an overall 18 per cent escalation in SFPP spending.

> Members of Council stated that the 15 per cent increase in the foundation program announced by the Minister of Education, was not sufficient to meet the salary requirements of teachers and should not be taken as a guide for salary increases.

Pointedly, the Council admonished any school board that would shirk its collective bargaining responsibility and "hide behind this decision of the government."

This reprobation notwithstanding, the 15 per cent figure assumed considerable prominence in later months. For example, the trustees of the Calgary Board of Education revised their proposed 1975 operating budget until it represented a spending increase of 15 per cent over 1974. Meanwhile, the neighbouring Calgary School division agreed upon a 15.5 per cent salary grid increase for its 255 teachers. Ten months elapsed before the overwhelming majority of 1975 teacher collective agreements were settled. They revealed a province-wide teacher salary grid increase of approximately 18 per cent (ASTA estimate). Considering that twenty-per cent of teachers covered by these agreements were also attempting to win compensation for spending power lost under two-year agreements in 1973 and 1974 (where no cost-of-living bonus had been payed), the fact that the arithmetic mean for grid settlements exceed 15 per cent was not altogether surprising.

Exploitation game analysis of strip #3. Events in April and May of 1974 signalled resumption of the exploitation game wherein the ATA and the ASTA pressured the province for compliance on two major points. In the first instance, they required an even larger infusion of funds than was previously the case, to facilitate collective bargaining in a year of double-digit inflation. Secondly, they continued to bridle against Department of Education regulations governing the supplementary requisition.

ATA predictions of impending "teacher-school board strife" and "difficult bargaining days" sought potency as situationally oriented appeals to trustees and provincial legislators who were scheduled to face their electorates within twelve months. Moreover, the ATA sought to draw upon the "harder" elements of its own identity with references to irrefutable basic commitment to such causes as quality education, high teacher morale and, in general, the championing of teacher rights (ATA News: April 30, 1974).

The ASTA's appeal was also situational and specific. It focused on spending controls and their allegedly unfair treatment of school boards. In reiterating this point (and highlighting the control's discriminatory nature by comparison with the apparent openhandedness in the relationship between the Department of Municipal Affairs and municipal councillors) the ASTA president sought to increase school trustee militancy. For example, at an ASTA sponsored administration seminar, he chided school trustees for failing to realize (or failing to act upon the realization) that they "always get the short end of the stick because they 'are the nice guys on the block,' not politicians" (Edmonton Journal: March 30, 1974). This allegation, repeated with minor variations in rhetoric at trustee assemblies cautioned the Minister of Education that continued relative docility of school trustees hinged upon the granting of some concessions in the area of finance and the supplementary requisition. Meanwhile, the efforts to establish a coalition with the ATA and the Alberta Federation of Home and School Associations also implied a threat to the government in terms of the potential such a union might manifest in calling it to account on behalf of the electorate.

The government was unwilling to intimidate its would-be exploiters. It parried their thrust using a situational strategy. The Minister addressed both teacher and trustee groups in the spring of 1974 in terms that indicated that provincial government educational finance policy was about to undergo revision to accommodate to a "major directional change." In his words this would constitute an entering upon "a second fork" in the path which had commenced four years previously with fiscal retrenchment (Field Notes: April 24, 1974). He cited observed improvement in links between the electorate and school trustees and optimistically forecast a trend toward "softening" by his Department with respect to supplementary requisition control. Again, he urged trustees to renew efforts that would raise their esteem in the eyes of the public to a level equal to that afforded municipal councillors and aldermen. In his estimation, the key to success in earning respect required exercise of good judgement in the context of school boards' existing powers.

The specific situational appeal was a promise that, in addition to existing government pleasure over perceived improvement in their performance, more tangible rewards were in the offing. This type of response was predicated on a particular definition of their relationship in the education situation that the Minister continued to assert. Where possible, he argued, he would be amenable to cooperation and joint discussion with both teachers and school boards. He emphasized for example, the value of such gatherings as the ASTA Annual Convention, suggesting that as the trustees' "parliament" it provided for the government a valuable distillation of the trustee viewpoint (Field Notes: November 4, 1974). He vowed neutrality between ATA and ASTA. Continuing with the situational theme, he stressed their importance as voices for their respective memberships. Nevertheless, the Minister reserved his right to dispense strong advice to the ATA and the ASTA. He exercised his presumed prerogative in an item-by-item review of resolutions scheduled for debate by trustees at the ASTA Annual Convention in 1974 (Field Notes: November 4, 1974). This review was preceded by the Minister's assertion that provincial representatives serve a common "trusteeship" function with school board members. This notion of trusteeship and his general concern for quality education received paramount attention in his November, 1974 announcement of SFPP revisions. The situational appeal avoided studiously any conscession that collective bargaining was a central concern in this action.

The would-be exploiters reacted to the parry and counter-thrust with ploys oriented both to situation and relationship. The first strategy was directed at minimizing the range of discretion available to the provincial authority at the time it made its funding decision. In other words, it was designed to "lead" the government. The situational strategy was suggested tentatively shortly following the announcement that the provincial general revenues would fund the equivalent of the former local 28 mill levy for SFPP purposes. A school board bargaining table spokesman remarked to colleagues:

> Local school boards are no longer important in educational finance. In attempting to bargain and hold down teachers' salaries, we should look upon ourselves as working for the provincial government, and not for school boards. Pretty soon it will go that way--just like in Saskatchewan. The ATA won't mind going to province-wide bargaining. The top boys probably are agreeable right now. It will take them a little while to convince the teachers though. (Field Notes: April 17, 1974) (Paraphrased)

The practice of "striking the best deal possible and then selling it to the province" faced entrenched resistance as the 'proper' situational relationship. In 1975 its general acceptance had not materialized. However, it may signal the onset of a changed reference frame. The general "consciousness" created not only by 15 per cent contracts, but by references to this figure in a variety of contexts nevertheless was an important vehicle for stabilizing teacher salary contract settlements in 1975. Whether the ASTA and the ATA exercised the more profound influence in creating the '15 per cent' expectation, or whether it was the government's achievement, remains a moot point. Their actions may have been mutually reinforcing.

The second ploy available to the would-be exploiters was that used in previous collective bargaining rounds. The Minister's SFPP announcement on November 4 was construed as a "collective bargaining guideline", but within a frame of reference different from that ascribed in the two previous years. Formerly, the SFPP regulation escalation had been looked upon as an upper limit to be breached to any considerable degree in only a few exceptional instances. Conditions had changed markedly by the latter portion of 1974 however. Conventional wisdom attached to such phrases as "holding the line on salaries" and "reasonable demands for salary increases" had been dissipated by rampant inflation and unprecedented annual salary and wage contracts elsewhere in the economy. Furthermore, burgeoning militancy among the previously unorganized or docile segments of the public service, contributed to disruption in patterns of salary increase paid by government to its employees generally.

Stated simply, the ATA, the ASTA, and the Department of Education, confronted disruption in their traditional understanding of what constituted "rational" salary increases. This situation was particularly threatening, and new "landmarks" had to be constructed in order to avoid chaos and conflict already apparent in other sectors. For the two provincial associations the SFPP spending regulation provided a "bearing" upon which, like navigators, they could take a "fix" and plot a course for collective bargaining. In particular localities the 15 per cent figure could be utilize as the basis for calculation and adjustment depending upon such factors as recent settlement patterns, and eventualities in comparable jurisdictions.

For the Department of Education, and other governmental agencies concerned with dispute settlement for example, the "guideline" connotation attached to the 15 per cent adjustment was also fortuitous, if not carefully planned. In the long run it may have risked compromising the government's commitment to local autonomy. In the shortrun however, the 15 per cent adjustment, announced amid a clamour of speculation and a glare of publicity, served to "dampen" the intensity of teacher salary increase demands.

The impact can be illustrated in terms of a firefighting analogy. If the confusion surrounding salary settlements can be likened to a fire burning out of control, the SFPP regulations constituted a "fire brake" set for the purpose of confining, if not totally extinguishing the conflagration. Carrying the analogy further, where particular jurisdictions could not find settlement approximating a range about 15 per cent, settlements beyond this range were reduced to the manageable proportion of a fire retarded in its onward rush after leaping a fire break. Recalcitrant boards and teachers, in other words, were isolated within particular frames of reference wherein particular techniques could be used to induce settlement. For instance the conciliation process places heavy emphasis upon equity in terms of comparable settlements. Particular teacher and trustee groups faced extreme pressure therefore, when trying to force agreement that deviated from the norm.

SUMMARY

One facet of interaction involved in staging the collective bargaining spectacle has been analyzed in terms of a game framework. Three 'strips' of consecutive action comprise the basis for analysis. Conceptually at least, analysis of the same strips is feasible in terms of face, relationship and information game format. The strips which cover a three-year period have been scrutinized for resemblance to exploitation game interaction.

Three participants namely, ASTA, ATA and the provincial government authorities (producer and director considered jointly), are identified as the game participants. In each strip these participants are presumably engaged in game-like interaction for the purpose of eliciting compliance with particular definitions. The object of their concern is control over regulation of spending on education, and the importance of the latter as the key to collective bargaining outcomes in any given year.

From the dramatic analogy standpoint, control of revenue affords the producer and director the opportunity to govern collective bargaining performance in such a way as to avoid compromising other commitments. That is to say, teacher salary disagreements can be settled with a minimum of economic and labour relations disruption. More importantly, teacher salary settlements may be stabilized without imposing excessive drain upon the public purse. Meanwhile, this is accomplished while a government commitment to local autonomy is asserted. School boards continue to accept responsibility for consolidating agreement with teachers at the bargaining table in much the same way as actors render performance subject to constraints inherent in scripts and other cues transmitted from offstage.

For its part, the ASTA acting on behalf of school boards, cannot impose imperative control over the way in which government funds education. It strives therefore, to develop a definition of the situation in which the provincial government will feel automatically obliged to fund education to the extent desired by school boards. One aspect of this endeavour involves capitalization on the government's commitment to local school board autonomy. On the other hand, when convenience dictates, the ASTA and school boards move to define provincial government finance regulations in a context where they become acceptable by teachers as constraints upon 'ability to pay' teacher salary increase demands.

The ATA is similarly constrained in the face of provincial government constitutional prerogatives. It also plays to win provincial government compliance by focusing on SFPP regulations as comprising "collective bargaining guidelines". Inequities, manufactured for the purpose of the game (or otherwise demonstrable) are then utilized to gain leverage with the provincial government identified as the "holder of the purse strings." Positive and negative reinforcement is offered the government in situations that are defined. For example, the ATA raises the specter of impending work stoppages in order to gain extra funding for school boards. Positive rewards include praise for the Minister of Education's statesmanship. In addition, employing a series of face and relationship game manoeuvers, the teacher and the trustee associations strive to jointly exploit their power as representatives of the larger education constituency for the end of winning provincial government compliance on their terms.

CHAPTER X

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

I SUMMARY

Need for the Study

This study originated with expressed administrative concern at an apparent inability of Alberta school boards and the Alberta Teachers' Association to resolve their collective bargaining differences without precipitous resort to government intervention and/or work stoppage. Ultimately, responsibility for this intervention resides with the Legislature and ministers of the Crown. That is to say, executive order and legislation underly the Minister of Manpower and Labour's authority to recommend termination of a teacher strike. Moreover, this minister's authority under The Alberta Labour Act requires that he exercise discretion in applying the statute's Conciliation provisions. Notwithstanding this politican's prerogatives such decisions imply many problems for administrators of educational affairs. The latter may be employed in the labour or education divisions of the civil service, by school boards, by the Alberta School Trustees' Association, or as executive staff in the Alberta Teachers' Association.

Administrators face pressure from politicians and from the public when the education service is disrupted by collective bargaining conflict and teachers' strikes. Confrontation at the bargaining table is also suspected of undermining teacher morale and productivity. This study however, suggests the possibility of yet another counterproductive effect. The latter occurs as a function of the overall ordered process whereby teachers' salaries and other working conditions are ultimately decided. That is to say, the clamour surrounding bargaining confrontation between teachers and school boards may be warranted in view of its disruptive and debilitating outcome. Nevertheless, the clamour may have obscured a more deep-rooted malaise. The latter concerns the extent to which the power dynamic, extant within the general education decision making order, undermines the general effectiveness of its participants against whom allegations of negotiating ineptitude are levelled.

Expressions of powerlessness and political impotence were forthcoming from school trustees during the study's earliest stages. The need to explore this phenomenon at the interaction level assumed an importance surpassing the researcher's initial preoccupation with public sector collective bargaining structures. This eventuality forced reappraisal of the study's basic conceptual framework. Originally it was formulated as an input-output model. However, transition to a conceptual mode reflecting phenomenological and existential philosophical roots was necessitated by field notes analysis. The change was more easily accomplished as a consequence of contemporary reappraisal of theory and research in educational administration by leading scholars in the field.

New Directions in Educational Administration Theory and Research

The conceptual breakthrough that facilitated this study's examination of power in the education collective bargaining setting constitutes a relatively recent development in the educational administration field. It is a product of heightened theoretical self-consciousness. T. Barr Greenfield (1974; 1976), for instance, reminds scholars in educational administration of a major flaw in systems and structural functionalist interpretations of organization. Their relatively exclusive reliance on these perspectives and positivist research conventions, he argues, has blinded them to ideology and the exercise of power as crucial components in the individual's "experience" of organizational life. While not entirely in agreement with Greenfield, Daniel Griffiths (1976) counsels scholars in educational administration to incorporate the latest social science theoretical developments within their respective research approaches.

Griffiths' suggestion reflects themes pursued by Mouzelis (1967) and Perrow (1972) when citing shortcomings in the general state of organization theory and research. Perrow is particularly intent upon discovering conceptual perspectives that allow scholars to ask pertinent questions with regard to the justification for organizational existence and the power which organizations wield in society. Michel Crozier (1973:vii) asserts that power is "a fundamental universal phenomenon, one which now constitutes the last taboo in the Western world." He (1973:19) identifies it as "the basic problem in all collective life." Like Dennis Wrong (1968), Crozier argues that research which probes the crucial "facts of power" must focus upon interaction processes. These occurring within the overall organizational setting are of particular importance in Crozier's estimation.

The reorientation of thinking in the social sciences which these views typify suggests profound changes in research. They are the precursors of new scientific paradigms that challenge previously dominant positivist tenets. Alternative social science paradigms have emerged in the nineteen seventies which not only require new methodologies, but demand new formats for rendering social accounts. This chapter's introduction furthermore, exemplifies the substantial influence that a particular paradigm may exert on the problem definition itself. Methodology, the study's accounting format, and its problem statement are now examined separately to illustrate the influence of this study's alternative scientific paradigm.

This Study's Conceptual Framework

This study's conceptual framework mirrored contemporary developments in the social sciences to which Griffiths alludes. It followed the directions suggested for the study of organizations by Mouzelis, Perrow and Crozier. Its description was accomplished by contrasting it with the scientific empirical tradition associated with systems perspectives on social research. In the educational administration literature, Greenfield (1974:9-10) offers a succinct summary of these two "views of social reality." He (1974:8-10) outlines the crucial differentiation between social reality as "a natural system" on the one hand, or a "human invention" on the other, in the following terms.

> . . . the crux of the issue is whether social reality is based upon naturally-existing systems or upon human invention of social forms. Social reality is usually construed as a natural and necessary order which, as it unfolds, permits human society to exist and people within it to meet their basic needs. Alternately social reality may be construed as images in the mind of man having no necessary or inevitable forms except as man creates them and endows them with reality and authority. In the one perspective, organizations are natural objects . . . ; in the other, organizations are cultural artifacts.

This study is oriented to the latter. It relies essentially upon the "action" perspective articulated by Silverman (1971:142-146).

Methodology. Participant observation constituted the basic data collection vehicle for this study. It was supplemented by interviews, analysis of printed material and information presented in the electronic media, as well as by observation at organized functions pertaining to school board business.

Participant observation at the headquarters of the Alberta School Trustees' Association commenced in November, 1973. Attendance on a continuous daily basis terminated in April, 1974. Commencing during that period and extending into May, 1974, participant observation strategies were utilized to investigate interaction associated with the negotiation of a collective agreement between six rural school boards comprising a regional bargaining authority on the one hand, and the Alberta Teachers' Association, on the other.

Less formal field work activity was conducted both prior and subsequent to these extended participant observation phases. During this informal investigation phase, interviews were conducted with individuals regarded as "knowledgeable others" on school board collective bargaining. Also, the researcher took advantage of as many opportunities as presented themselves for securing comment from individuals with experience in the education collective bargaining setting. For example, when a teachers' strike began in the Spring of 1973, teachers, trustees, and administrators at one school board involved in the stoppage were interviewed. Follow-up interviews were recorded subsequent to the dispute's settlement. During 1974 and 1975, while data analysis continued, tentative conclusions were tested for accuracy against emergent events and new interview material.

Document and media examination, following formal participant observation, facilitated this ongoing analysis. Basic sources during participant observation included ASTA papers, documents relating to conciliation board hearings, meeting agendas and minutes, as well as material supplied by a commercial newsclipping firm. The electronic news media, the daily press, and printed material circulated by the ATA and the ASTA, comprised the basic information sources during the study's final phase.

Finally, a valuable source of school trustee opinion was an opinion survey administered personally at six school board meetings. The six school jurisdictions were engaged in regional bargaining as a school authorities association. The opinion survey provided frequency counts of trustee and local board administrator opinion on general collective bargaining matters as well as with respect to a memorandum of agreement then-currently under review and subsequently endorsed. The questions appearing on the survey instrument were formulated on the basis of researcher insight accumulated as a result of participant observation. The opinion survey was supplemented by responses recorded on the basis of general field work contact with local school trustees and administrators. Trustee conferences, the ASTA annual conventions, as well as its numerous seminars, and council meetings were ideal venues for data gathering.

The study's descriptive and analytic format. The dramatic and game metaphors supplied the study's basic accounting format. The overall organization of collective bargaining in the Alberta education setting was posited as resembling the staging of a theatrical spectacle. Erving Goffman's (1959) dramaturgic framework, developed in the general social science context, is the source for the study's theatrical analogy. The game model, derivative of Goffman's work, has been expanded by Lyman and Scott (1970). They identify similarities between human behaviour in diverse social settings and strategies detectable in competitive games. Their framework includes information, relationship, face, and exploitation games.

Dramatic portrayal involves calculated behaviour. Calculation occurs substantially in a realm concealed from the audience. In theatrical terms this premise is illustrated by the differentiation between frontstage and backstage action. In this study, education collective bargaining between particular school boards and the ATA was presumed to resemble frontstage action. On the other hand, lobbying by the teachers' and the school boards' provincial associations, as well as interaction within the ATA and the ASTA, was described as resembling backstage participation. Theatrical performers are presumed capable of extemporaneous performance depending upon script, direction, and setting. Similarly, this study argued that school boards' autonomous collective bargaining capacity remained subject to constraints emanating from backstage-like direction. The general social-economic-political environment was also presumed to exercise an influence over collective bargaining performance.

In order to illuminate various capacities for extemporaneous performance which individuals and groups associated with school board collective bargaining were supposed to posses, the study relies upon the personal ideal-type construct. That is to say, the researcher sought commonalities surrounding particular types of collective bargaining involvement at the school board level. The aim was to draft composite, authentic performance profiles. No individual participant was described as the epitome of any particular type.

On the other hand, interaction sequences or "strips" (Goffman 1974) were sought which exemplified Lyman and Scott's game framework. Potentially, many sequences recorded in the field notes might have been documented in the study's account to illustrate the four games contained in their model. Inter-organizational, as well as intra-organizational interaction supplied the researcher with useable examples. The researcher confined analysis to one particular game type, the exploitation game. Moreover, the exploitation game illustration was developed specifically in relation to three "strips". These three segments were drawn from the backstage setting and involved interaction between the provincial government, the ATA, and the ASTA. The strips jointly documented action which continued over a four-year period.

The problem. The preceding narrative traces an evolution in this study's research problem. Interest in the inquiry was generated by expressed concern that school boards and teachers were apparently incapable of settling their collective bargaining differences without resorting to third-party intervention. Evidence accumulated at various research sites, as well as analysis predicated upon recent social science trends, led the researcher to revise the original problem formulation. This procedure, according to several authorities, is typical in field research. When, for example, the study was initially proposed, Schatzman and Strauss' (1973) caveat was taken under advisement.

> Conventional wisdom suggests that a researcher prepare a relatively articulated problem in advance of his inquiry. This implies that he would not, or could not, begin his inquiry without a problem. Yet the field method process of

> discovery may lead the researcher to his problem after it has lead him through much of the substance in his field. Problem statements are not prerequisite to field research; they may emerge at any point in the research process, even toward the very end.

Francis A. J. Ianni (1976:12) justifies this particular flexibility in educational administration research partly on the basis of methodological pragmatism which field research, by nature, requires. More importantly, he argues that inadequate knowledge of the educational administration field leaves the researcher with little choice on the matter.

> . . . in applied professional fields such as educational administration, there is some question as to whether the prior picture of the world from which we derive questions, frame hypotheses and identify variables is, in fact, representative of the empirical world of practice we are proposing to improve through research. Those of us who propose the use of field methods in the study of educating organizations start from the assumption that the test of the empirical world begins in the empirical world itself since operational reality begins there.

The following restatement of this study's problem therefore, depicts the operational reality experienced by the researcher at various sites in the Alberta education collective bargaining organization.

Statement of the problem. The study's general purpose was to explore interaction process underlying completion of formal collective agreements between Alberta school boards and the Alberta Teachers' Association. Subsequently, particular emphasis was placed upon delineation of the nature and extent of collective bargaining involvement by particular individuals and groups. These included school trustees, local school board officials, ASTA professional staff, and other consultants retained by school boards to perform collective bargaining duties. With respect to the larger scheme of collective bargaining organization, the study sought to identify individuals and groups that corresponded to backstage performers in the theatrical analogy. In particular, these were sought in the provincial government as well as in the general realm of political interest group activity.

Two categories of sub-problems were also broached. These correspond to Greenfield's (1974:34-35) general differentiation between objective and subjective states to which he applies the terms "external" and "internal" variables respectively. This study's first category of sub-problems involved isolation of pertinent elements extant in the collective bargaining setting and its environment. Qualitative characteristics were the focus of questions listed in the second sub-category.

Backstage and frontstage identities were to be identified as the first task in the quest for external variables. Secondly, identification and description of basic formal structures characterizing the overall organization of education collective bargaining was required. The third external variable sub-problem concerned description of the general social-economic-political environment in which school boards negotiate with the ATA.

The study's inner perspective, was developed on the basis of two basic sub-problem questions. Firstly, the researcher examined the quality of collective bargaining interaction at the school board level. In other words, he asked, "What characteristics typify relationships within local school boards when trustee and administrator resources are applied to collective bargaining matters?" A second sub-problem within the internal variable category concerned the quality of relationships between behind-the-scenes participants. The study's focus of attention in this regard were relationships between the provincial government, the ATA, and the ASTA.

Delimitations

The study's major delimiting factor was the scarcity of time and resources. The sole participant observer could apply only partial attention over a broad expanse of interaction at any particular time. The need for confidentiality that is prerequisite to collective bargaining effectiveness also curtailed the extent to which the researcher could probe sensitive decision points. Finally, the major vantage points for participant observation of the overall education collective bargaining setting were adopted within school board organizations. While this strategy may have enhanced the study's insight on the school board perspective, this gain was made at the cost of less extensive penetration of teacher and government locations.

Limitations

During the participant observation stage of the study, school boards were engaged in collective bargaining with ATA locals accounting for only 40 per cent of the provincial teaching force. Moreover, only one of the four major ATA locals located in Edmonton and Calgary were engaged in collective bargaining on new contracts. They were, however, participating in pressure activity to induce school boards to reopen existing agreements for the purpose of including cost-of-living adjustments.

Summary of the Study's Findings

Preliminary analysis of field notes suggested the relevance of the theatrical and game metaphors to description and analysis of Alberta education collective bargaining organization. Subsequent reflection revealed close correspondence between collective bargaining related activity on the one hand, and dramatic as well as game-like performance on the other.

The frontstage and backstage theatrical arenas resemble, for example, local school board collective bargaining activity in the first instance, and education political interest group activity in the second. Backstage activity has several distinct interaction levels, mirrored in political lobbying and internal activity involving the Alberta School Trustees' Association. Although this study did not focus on the internal operations of the provincial government and its civil service, or the Alberta Teachers' Association, the researcher's experience suggests that these different interaction realms would comprise equally fruitful research sites as tests of the dramaturgic metaphor.

The backstage members of the theatrical company. A vital controlling role is that concerning the provincial government's efforts to organize collective bargaining between school boards and the ATA. Comparison is made with the internal operations of a theatrical company. The producer, director, co-director, and other stage hands, are responsible for setting parameters for onstage performance. Box office success and reputation are presumed to be their prime motivators. The provincial government corresponds with the producer allusion. The ministers in the Alberta government who hold the education and labour portfolios resemble the director and co-director respectively. Their subordinates in the Alberta civil service are responsible for carrying out their directives which are launched under prerogatives vested in the ministers, either through a series of education statutes or The Alberta Labour Act.

The collective bargaining activities of the local school boards in Alberta are "stage managed" particularly as a result of provincial government control over two crucial variables. The first is finance. The second is Conciliation. School board finance is substantially subject to government regulation through the School Foundation Program and provincial dictates concerning supplementary requisition ceilings. Conciliation is a fact finding and reporting process over which the Minister of Manpower and Labour exercises authority. School boards and the ATA may not resort to punitive action until such time as the conciliation process mechanisms have been exhausted. Utilizing these, as well as other prerogatives which the provincial government retains under its constitutional mandate, the central authority is admirably placed to impose its particular stamp on local school board collective bargaining outcomes. As is the case in the theatre, the producer and director of the education collective bargaining spectacle stand to gain from public appreciation of positive collective bargaining outcomes. They may, for example, benefit through support at the polls and/or through stability in the financial burden of teachers' salaries.

One theatrical agent and its clients. School boards have followed the lead set by the ATA (Odynak 1963; Kratzmann 1963) in recognizing the need for a strong provincial-level organization to influence provincial government decisions involving education generally. Their provincial organization, the Alberta School Trustees' Association, performs a function resembling that of theatrical agent. Collective bargaining services are but one of its responsibilities. Its Economic Services department also aspires to a leading role in handling communication between boards, coordinating collective bargaining, formulating school boards' policies with respect to collective bargaining issues, and socializing school trustees to collective bargaining realities.

Considerable discrepancy exists, however, between the role to which ASTA staff officers aspire, and that which they currently perform. Considerable internal conflict undermines their effectiveness and their Association's overall capacity to rival the ATA's successes in collective bargaining. One major problem is the ASTA's failure to resolve ambiguity surrounding its commitment to local school board autonomy on the one hand, and, on the other, its need to mobilize school boards on a united front to achieve maximum leverage as a political interest group. A major obstacle to accomplishing the latter is considerable mistrust with which local school trustees perceive the ASTA and certain of its officials.

The ASTA's Economic Services department suffers from lack of credibility which is difficult to ameleriorate. It is denied access to tasks, the successful execution of which would enhance its officers' prestige. Meanwhile, these officers perform vital, yet unspectacular functions. They are victims of an overbearing scrutiny by the Association's elected executive and other individuals who hold office in its various councils and committees. The situation in which credibility is a crucial issue involves operation of a self-fulfilling prophecy. Because of the ASTA's high rate of staff attrition, staff officers are socialized to a subservient role perpetuated by a group of school trustees who have the time and resources to continuously audit Association work routines. The ASTA Economic Services staff is relegated to a position where it is expected to supply the Association's politicians with the where-with-all for public performance. The non-monetary rewards for this service are not commensurate with that which the staff officers perceive as appropriate. The net result is continued deterioration in morale and, in the long run, a docility that is counterproductive to the ASTA's agency effectiveness.

The collective bargaining "stage and backdrop". The stage and backdrop simultaneously constrains and facilitates actor performance. Similarly, school boards engage in collective bargaining against a background of social, economic, and political factors which, in addition to certain formal structures, influence the way in which they calculate and execute strategy. The collective bargaining "stage and backdrop" may limit capacity of a school board to strike a favourable bargain. On the other hand, it might buttress its bargaining table posture. These factors may be interpreted as resembling the challenge to an actor's skill and stagecraft presented by a theatre and its appurtenances.

The legal, formal structures that characterize collective bargaining organization resemble the theatrical amphitheatre. These structures, for the most part, do not exist independently of those responsible for staging collective bargaining in Alberta. That is to say, the structures which may constrain or shape collective bargaining performance have, in some instances at least, been forged during "backstage" interaction." This phenomenon parallels the influence which a director exerts over a production when chosing a theatre, approving set designs, and organizing the cast of onstage performers.

The Alberta education collective bargaining situation incorporates a diverse range of bargaining unit characteristics. They may be differentiated on such dimensions as ATA local size, local or regional organization, rural and urban jurisdictions, public or separate school organization, location within Alberta, geographic size and characteristics, and variation in governance. Regional bargaining and problems arising from amalgamation of school with municipal governance under The County Act, warrant special consideration.

Regional collective bargaining as members of school authorities' associations was commenced by many Alberta school boards in the nineteen seventies. In 1974, fifty-nine rural school boards employing approximately 25 per cent of Alberta's school teachers, retained membership in seven SAAs. Trustee proponents of regional bargaining argue that it combats "whipsaw" strategy whereby the ATA forces teacher salary concessions by 'playing off' one board against the other. Other school board members prefer the SAA mode because it removes collective bargaining acrimony from local relationships with teachers. On the other hand, regional bargaining is opposed by other school trustees who assert that it decreases the capacity of school boards to arrive at amicable agreement locally with teachers. Organizationally, regional bargaining presents serious problems with respect to communication and local school trustee participation in decision making on teachers' salaries and working conditions.

Education and municipal administration have been amalgamated in jurisdictions where the county form of local government has been adopted in Alberta during the past two decades. In some counties, considerable confusion and conflict arises because the two administrative hierarchies experience difficulty in resolving questions concerning responsibility for school board collective bargaining. The situation is further complicated by the fact that the education committee of a county council must rely on the county for its funding. This arrangement causes conflict between county councillors on the one hand who control school financing, and on the other, village and town education representatives.

In addition to factors associated with specific venues, actors confront other environmental features which may impede or facilitate convincing performance. The discretion available to school boards in collective bargaining also varies according to the potency of environmental variables. For instance, during 1973 and 1974, the cost of living was rising at a rate unprecedented in the previous two decades. Inflation had become a subject of volatile public debate and school boards were forced to accept the Canadian Consumer Price Index as a measuring stick against which their salary offers would be evaluated in the media. Moreover, local, provincial, and national economic conditions also mirrored inflationary pressures, thus reinforcing the latter's impact on bargaining table deliberations. Salary settlements in other provincial jurisdictions may have influenced Alberta school teacher salary agreements. However, the quest by Alberta school boards for predecents against which to pitch their own salary concessions focused on contracts completed with the ATA in neighbouring bargaining units. The principle of comparability as a rationale for approving school board memoranda of agreements was so salient as to approximate, in effect, an "iron law".

Typology of school board collective bargaining involvement. The study based its assessment of school board collective bargaining relationships on the ideal-type construct. It was developed on the evidence of variation in the nature and extent of "onstage performance" by school trustees, school board officials, ASTA staff, and consultants hired by school boards. Star performer, supporting actor, gladiator, and chorus ideal-types were delineated.

As the title suggests, the star performer prefers activities that yield high public visibility. The star performer is committed to many facets of public service in addition to school board collective bargaining. Power and influence for this individual in the municipal, education, and provincial political spheres, requires that the star performer endeavour persistently to penetrating key decision points. In addition, he/she strives to be so placed as to take advantage of the latest information on a broad range of matters. Public recognition and credibility are advantages for which the star performer constantly aspires.

The ASTA provides many venues for this type of motivated individual. Collective bargaining and its associated political interest group activity automatically attract a clique of star performers. The quality of ASTA effectiveness in these two-domains suffers because star performers find it difficult to establish sufficient mutuality of interest. Bargaining table spokesman[1] is one prominent position that is not universally coveted by star performers. The star performer's purposes may be accomplished equally well by retaining school board negotiation committee leadership. In this way maximum publicity is ensured without the risk of the hostility that frequently befalls the spokesman.

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[1] "Spokesman" is used intentionally to typify the sex of those who are usually designated to present school board argument at the bargaining table. Individual women have provided distinguished service with the ASTA and school boards, but they rarely receive appointment as chief negotiators.

The individual responsible for arguing the school board's case at the bargaining table is designated gladiator in the typology for obvious reasons. While the gladiator may be a school trustee, he may also be a school board official, an ASTA staff officer, or a hired consultant. The gladiator faces two basic hurdles. In the first place he must reach an agreement with the ATA. Secondly, he must "sell" the agreement to a school board negotiating committee and the school board itself. Meanwhile, achievement of both objectives implies the capacity to maintain caucus discipline. Several major obstacles present themselves in this regard. A star performer may demand to share leadership, if not to dominate the caucus. Information which is vital for collective bargaining success may also be prized as a vehicle for furthering other individual trustees' personal political and social motives. In both cases the gladiator must be resigned to "war on two fronts." Finally, the gladiator for whom credibility is crucial strives to secure unequivocal support from his school board on all bargaining positions.

Because current and accurate information attracts a premium in collective bargaining, one individual who supplies this, the supporting actor, is also indispensible for effective negotiation ventures. This role is typically performed by school board officials and ASTA staff officers. While their contribution to a school board's bargaining effort is crucial, their access to information which is equatable with potential power places them in potential conflict with star performers. That is to say, the latter do not appreciate the possibility of being "upstaged." The star performers develop their own sets of preferred bargaining outcomes. The situation thus created is tension-ridden. It creates many problems which diminish the ASTA's effectiveness and have a debilitating effect on local school board collective bargaining.

For a large group of school trustees and school board officials, participation in collective bargaining-related business is of only minor importance. Activity is usually confined to such tasks as cursory examination of school board collective bargaining proposals, witnessing intermittent negotiating committee reports, and endorsement of a memorandum of agreement. This activity is compared with that manifested by the chorus in ancient Greek drama. Greater participation is virtually precluded by the need for confidentiality in collective bargaining matters. Moreover, many school trustees have neither the time nor the desire to embroil themselves in the frequently-prolonged negotiation process.

Work stoppages, or threats of strikes, by teachers provide the rare occasions upon which chorus participation in collective bargaining is intensified. In these situations, several difficulties are encountered. In the first place, the niceties of particular salary offers and counter offers are not easily grasped by individuals who traditionally have been kept at a distance removed from bargaining table affairs. Secondly, the need for secrecy within a school board is more acute at this stage when public clamour forces the chorus to actively involve itself in collective bargaining.

"Dramatic by-play" between school board performers. The means by which the negotiators circumvent chorus intrusions also warrants examination in terms of impression management. The chorus which in this example would be the audience is 'filtered' information from the negotiating committee caucus. It is made privy to caucus secrets in much the same way as an audience is allowed into certain backstage areas. Having been "taken into the negotiation committee's confidence" the chorus is led to believe that it is in command of "all the facts," and that it is in command of the school boards' affairs. The feeling of responsibility, thus engendered, may be sufficient to ameliorate trustees' anxieties in the face of public pressure. Newly-bestowed confidences may also engender a sense of responsibility that ensures confidentiality and unity.

On the other hand, they have information at their disposal which they may, if they wish, "leak" without undermining the negotiation committee. Even in the event that the chorus member harbours the suspicion that not everything has been revealed, the impression that he/she does command the facts may be personally sufficient. In other words, interaction between individuals and groups described by the four ideal-types resembles mini-drama. An audience watching a Shakespearian play suspends disbelief at the appearance of Banquo's ghost or during an aside rendered in the presence of actors apparently oblivious of these events. In like manner, chorus and the public generally are prepared within limits to subscribe to the myth that the chorus actually controls collective bargaining by school boards. The "limits" are subject to the vagaries of ambiguously-defined exchange. The experience of this study suggests that the ambiguity is subject to resolution and reinterpretation in game-like exchanges resembling those outlined in the subsequent section.

Interaction as a game. Interaction between individuals and groups associated with collective bargaining at the school board level received only partial analysis within the dramatic analogy framework. On the other hand, interaction characterizing relationships between the provincial government, the ASTA, and the ATA, received much closer scrutiny. Lyman and Scott's game model derivative of Erving Goffman's dramaturgic framework was the medium for this analysis. Because space was a limiting factor, the exploitation game analogy only received detailed attention. The evidence suggests however, the considerable relevance of face, relationship, and information games.

Between 1972 and 1975, the provincial government, the ASTA, and the ATA engaged in a series of phased game-like exchanges. Each sought to extract from the other some measure of effective compliance with its particular situational definition of the collective bargaining ramifications arising out of annual school finance regulation adjustments. With the passage of time, the three-way contest was modified to the extent that commonality of interest between the ASTA and the ATA began to emerge. Consequently, the game-like exchanges became increasingly two-way with only minor differences separating the public utterances of officials representing the teachers' and the school trustees' associations. The latter was indicative, not so much of total unanimity between the two but, that a positive relationship game was proceeding simultaneously.[2]

For its part, the Department of Education during 1972 was faced with a new task involving school board compliance with its definition of appropriate fiscal restraint. Originally, compliance had been accomplished subsequent to the revised School Foundation Program Fund announced in 1970. Changing budgetary circumstances had placed the provincial government in a position where annual school board spending could be allowed to escalate at a rate higher than the six per cent achieved annually in the previous three years. While moving to what is called "soft" control on school board spending, the Minister and the Department of Education also sought to maintain the appearances of a commitment to local school board autonomy and non-interference with teacher-school board collective bargaining. In a series of three exploitation game exchanges with the ASTA and the ATA, the provincial government used its power to regulate annual escalation in SFPP grants, as well as to control annual increases in the supplementary requisition by local school boards on municipalities. In so doing it also indirectly stablized the annual rate of increase in Alberta teachers' salaries.

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[2] In this and subsequent usage of the game titles, the underlying sense that is implied is that the interaction between government, the ASTA, and the ATA, resembles such games.

The Minister and Department of Education officials avoided specific reference to teacher salary increases when discussing these annual adjustments. They asserted that teacher salaries were to be settled in negotiations between teachers and school boards. Nevertheless, annual Ministerial announcements respecting SFPP grants and supplementary requisition controls exerted considerable influence on subsequent teacher salary agreements. The advanced publicity and ceremony surrounding the Minister of Education's SFPP announcement in 1973 and 1974 provided those requiring wage and salary guidelines a prominent and convenient measuring stick. The principle of comparability served to reinforce a trend toward settlement universality once a few "lighthouse" agreements approximated the figure prominently featured in the current Ministerial SFPP revision.

For example, in 1973 7 1/2 per cent enjoyed currency. In 1974 and 1975, 9 per cent and 15 per cent respectively became the percentage increases against which teacher salary contracts were evaluated.

In addition to its capacity to evoke situational appeal in exploitation game exchanges, the provincial government resorted to motivationally-based appeal. That is to say, the ASTA and school boards were advised to strive for more equal partnership with the provincial government and municipalities on the basis of earned-reputation for fiscal and political astuteness. In pursuing this motivationally-oriented argument, the Minister made frequent reference to the increased personal self esteem that trustees would experience once having demonstrated these qualities. Also in his repertoire of motivational appeals, were positive reactions to successes that school boards had already achieved in recording budget surpluses. He hinted that further improvement would increase his disposition toward elimination of supplementary requisition controls and the granting of access to the local tax base.

The ASTA and the ATA participated in exploitation encounters with the provincial government, having already been made fully aware of the latter's "hard" identity by the 1970 fiscal retrenchment. The fiscal restraints which the Alberta Department of Education imposed at that time constituted a strong reminder that the provincial government retains ultimate constitutional authority for educational governance. The teachers' and the trustees' associations recognized therefore, that depending on circumstances, their thrusts can be thwarted by a government shift to a "hard" identity. Consequently, these two protagonists in 1972, 1973, and 1974, strove to deny the central authority access to its hard identity without actually issuing a direct challenge to its constitutional authority.

In response to the government's thrust in attempting to define its SFPP revisions as a shift to "soft" control of education spending generally, the ATA and the ASTA would not comply. They resisted the Department of Education's implication that the regulation revisions should not be perceived as Ministerial control of teacher salary increases. The two associations parried by defining the SFPP adjustments as "salary guidelines." They tried to use this as a lever against the government by contrasting this definition with its alleged commitment to local school board autonomy. This tactic failed to force the government to retreat from its earlier thrust to secure school board acceptance of supplementary requisition controls. The government's tactic had been to modify the plebiscite regulations governing the latter. This ploy placed it in a position to argue that, in theory at least, local school boards possessed the capacity to pay salary increases exceeding the rate associated with annual school grant increases.

The ASTA and the ATA challenged the government's new thrust. They argued that freedom to use the supplementary requisition was more apparent than real in view of local political and economic climates. They also argued that the "mind set" created by the Minister's annual announcements was further, an indication to the local ratepayers that the Department of Education opposed supplementary requisition increases beyond the provincially-designated figure. On the basis of this definition, the ATA mounted a series of concerted efforts to label the provincial government as the exclusive "holder of the purse strings" insofar as education was concerned. This ploy provided it with the avenue for holding the government and its education department accountable for alleged deterioration in teacher morale and the quality of education. Meanwhile, the ASTA, following a similar identity definition, emphasized the government's moral responsibility to compensate school boards for inflation's inroads. It also demanded funds to fulfill school boards' mandate to provide quality education, already jeopardized by staff and program cuts. The latter, the ASTA argued, were functions of the national and provincial governments' failure to restrain inflation.

Motivational ploys were also evidenced in the repertoire of game-like strategies used by both pressure groups. The ASTA's officials were periodically cited in the media praising the Minister for his statesman-like actions, such as when he secured favourable tax assessment solutions for the province's separate schools. At trustee functions his appearances were welcomed in phrases that praised him as a "friend of school boards." Implicitly, the ASTA reminded the Minister that a public satisfied with a quality product from the province's schools would inevitably express its appreciation at the provincial polls. It linked the quality product with increased funding that would compensate for monies expended in compensating teachers for inflation.

The ATA's positive motivators also involved praise. Announcements of salary agreements and the implied restoration of labour-management harmony in education were frequently accompanied by praise of the Minister of Education's timely intervention with SFPP revisions. Moreover, the ATA persisted in associating particular salary agreement increases with the percentage increase in SFPP grants. The government received negative reinforcement from the ATA as well. This type of motivational thrust usually involved stern hints of impending province-wide strikes and bargaining table conflict between school boards and teachers. These statements usually provided a background for ATA submissions to the Cabinet for increased educational funding. They usually appeared moreover, prior to each year's collective bargaining rounds.

Although these game-like encounters are labelled as exploitation exchanges, they were approached by the parties with a measure of detachment. The ASTA officials recognized the interaction as an ongoing phenomenon. No outright winners and losers would eventuate. Each party was seen as being part of a continuing relationship. Therefore, total defeat of the others was not the objective in these exchanges. Each party had to be accorded a measure of satisfaction to ensure continued overall stability in the teacher-school board collective bargaining. That latter served the interests of all parties. In other words the participants, though in competition, shared a joint stake in the game's continuance.

II CONCLUSIONS

Because the study is exploratory and follows directions suggested by emerging sociological perspectives, conclusions are highly tentative. They are ventured with respect to the three basic components of the conceptual framework--methodology, standards of verification, and theory. Allied with the latter are a series of observations pertaining specifically to the Alberta education collective bargaining sphere as it is explained in dramaturgic-game terms.

Methodology

Depending upon conceptual framework and conditions prevailing at the research site, a would-be investigator may draw from a variety of possible data collection devices. In this study, participant observation constituted the basic research tool. Its use revealed strengths and weaknesses in the technique. Summarized, these include:

Strengths

(i) Participant observation acquaints the researcher with a large volume of information on a broad range of matters pertaining to the research topic.

(ii) Participant observation affords the researcher opportunity to pursue in-depth inquiry on matters of emergent concern.

(iii) The participant observer is advantageously placed to capture the "essence" of interaction that is under review.

(iv) Substantially, as a consequence of the foregoing, the participant observer enjoys the opportunity to "develop" a study in directions more productive than those readily apparent at the outset of investigation, and which would be virtually impossible to detect or contemplate with other methodologies.

Difficulties

(i) Participant observation in the collective bargaining domain is hazardous. The future course of events frequently defies accurate forecasting and consequently, the researcher lives with a constant uncertainty that crucial events will occur with such rapidity as to escape observation. A further concern is that the phase under observation may extend beyond the maximum time allowable for the study.

(ii) The politically sensitive nature of collective bargaining in the education sector confronts the participant observer with virtually insurmountable problems with regard to direct access to sites at which vital deliberations occur. Never-the-less, the methodology is superior to many other data gathering techniques in that it affords the researcher opportunities to probe, obliquely, hidden areas of action.

(iii) In the day-by-day course of participant observation, the researcher accumulates voluminious quantities of raw data, only a fraction of which can be accommodated within the study report.

(iv) The participant observer's reliance on daily interaction implies the inevitability of experiencing periods when "nothing is happening", while at other times, events are moving so rapidly as to overtax the individual researcher's resources.

In summary, these difficulties render participant observation a potentially stressful research operation. Other research techniques are also characterized by unique tension-inducing factors. However, the potential stress factor which is substantially neglected in participant observation textbook references is particularly crucial to the extent that it bears directly upon the investigator's capacity to operate in the field. Anxiety and tension communicated by the researcher, may impair the quality of rapport possible between the observer and the research subjects. Another factor overlooked in the literature on methodology are the dilemmas surrounding the investigator's appreciation for respondents' hospitality and cooperation on the one hand, and, on the other, the necessity to report observations which may reflect adversely on those from whom assistance was forthcoming.

Standards of Verification

Uncertainties surrounding standards of verification constitute for the participant observer an additional source for concern, and a spur to greater self-consciousness. Ultimately the latter compensates for a dearth of traditional external guidelines. As a study proceeds and field notes accumulate the participant observer becomes acutely aware of the need for systematic organization. Canons of scientific empiricism enjoy widespread acceptance and create popular preoccupation with objectivity and bias-free reporting. Consequently, the participant observer inevitably confronts the difficult prospect of dispelling skepticism over departures from time-honoured form. Being sensitive to credibility's importance, the observer suffers powerful constraint on any tendency to accept data without close scrutiny. This self-consciousness forces the observer to cross-check observations virtually on a day-by-day basis. Monitoring devices in this study were "stylisic" rather than "formalistic". The former include the practice of registering impressions with research subjects or knowledgeable others, as well as the practice of confirmation through accurate prediction of emergent outcomes. Without this flexibility, the capacity to penetrate the subtleties of interaction typically encountered in a highly politicized collective bargaining setting would have been curtailed. In other words, that which is lost by an apparent failure to pay formal homage to the "appearances" of objectivity, is compensated by the leverage for discussion purposes at least, which the stylistic mode facilitates in the area of human behaviour.

Theory

This study derives its need from opinion cited in the first chapter that suggested a need for alternatives to the organization perspective traditionally derived from Systems-based sociology. Of immediate concern to Perrow (1972) for example, was the need for a conceptual framework which broaches issues underlying the need for organizations, as well as the very nature of power which they currently manifest in society. One general conclusion suggested by this study is that the dramaturgic frame of reference and its game derivative affords the researcher scope to address both these questions.

The study reveals clear parallels between education sector collective bargaining organization on the one hand, and the interaction typically underlying the staging of a theatrical production on the other. The similarities were not derived as a consequence of a preconceived notion that the two should correspond, and an attendant search for data supporting such a supposition. From the dramaturgic-game framework, in so far as it mirrors the nature of education sector collective bargaining organization, nine tentative conclusions can be drawn.

Conclusion #1

Decisions pertaining to teacher remuneration, as well as other terms and conditions governing teacher employment, are taken in a milieu that is populated by entities the objectives of which are diverse and frequently conflicting.

Elaboration. Conflict between the ASTA and the ATA received extensive documentation prior to this study. However, this study's findings reflect conflict in many facets of relationships within the education collective bargaining sphere. Disunity, for example, arises between school boards as well as between the ASTA and its member school boards, with respect to desired collective bargaining outcomes. Moreover, school authorities periodically express their opposition to provincial government actions which impinge upon their perceived collective bargaining prerogatives. Apparently incompatible objectives are not solely an inter-organization phenomenon. Within such entities as school boards, employers' associations formed by school boards, and the ASTA itself, groups and individuals contest with each other for the purpose of securing acquiescence to sets of preferred collective bargaining related objectives. This observed state of affairs reflects the traditional Hobbesian dilemma of how order is possible in situations populated by individuals and groups each divided against the other. The conclusions which follow pose an alternative to the Systems interpretation of the dilemma.

Conclusion #2

> *Disposition of problems and issues pertaining to teacher remuneration, as well as other terms and conditions governing teacher employment, is accomplished within a ceremonial-like order. The order, sponsored by the provincial government and buttressed by support from the major education political interest groups facilitates identity definition, as well as development of acceptable behaviour conventions. It is characterized by social interaction wherein the exercise of power to achieve compliance and maintain the order is a basic ingredient.*

Elaboration. The provincial government has organized interaction with respect to teacher remuneration and related matters. It draws upon power resources located in its constitutional prerogatives and other aspects of its position, such as a public mandate and capacity to influence public opinion, to sponsor and maintain an order as a bulwark against imminent chaos. The order resembles the organization by which a producer and director stage a theatrical production. The effective use of power for the initiators in both instances, hinges upon their capacity to mask its real source and to retain the capacity for discretionary action. Meanwhile, they effectively circumscribe that available to others. In the education domain the backstage-frontstage action dichotomy is reflected in decisions negotiated between provincial authorities and the education political interest groups. These decisions subsequently establish constraints upon collective bargaining by school boards and ATA locals. Meanwhile, the ceremonial trappings attached to the overall procedure create an illusion of interdependency and purposes common to all participants.

Conclusion #3

Maintenance of the sponsored social order is accomplished with the support of individuals and groups for whom the order affords scope to acquire material and symbolic rewards.

Elaboration. Internally individuals and groups exploit their unique situational flexibility to achieve self-defined goals. At the most elevated levels, they have access to crucial decision points as well as current and vital information. These positions are typically located adjacent to government policy making sources. The incumbents may hold such office as at the head of particularly important school boards or school board coalitions. They also occupy upper echelons of the ASTA and ATA. Potentially, order-related benefits may be valued as instruments for achieving more general rewards. That is, they constitute steps to further political advancement. For the ASTA and the ATA, the order is beneficial in that these organizations are recognized as intermediaries for the school boards' and teachers' interests. Notwithstanding the value which this arrangement has for teachers and boards, it conversely provides both political interest groups with viable means for controlling membership and enhancing the power of those controlling the respective organizations.

Conclusion #4

Whereas those located at the apex of the sponsored order's power hierarchy are so placed as to exercise power

> *for material and symbolic ends, at the lower ranges of the scale, enlisted participation and/or acquiescence depends heavily upon the effectiveness of symbols.*

Elaboration. The capacity to achieve material personal goals is circumscribed for trustees who are denied access to decision points, current information, and control over rewards. Consequently, incentive to participate for the purpose of achieving material benefits, although not eliminated, is curtailed. Their position resembles the actor whose entrances, exits, and speaking parts are tightly scripted. This individual operates at the periphery of the drama, almost as a spectator, but extracting a certain amount of reflected glory. Moreover, the prospect of future rewards may be sufficiently tantalizing to induce compliance. In terms of school trustee involvement in collective bargaining, this amounts to witnessing relatively superficial negotiation progress reports. Eventually, it culminates with a motion to accept a memorandum of agreement.

Other symbolic exchanges involve ceremonies in which the power disparity is ceremonially alleviated. For instance, within the ASTA, trustees are accorded the apparent right to censure the Association's Executive by rejecting its budget resolution in Annual Convention. The Minister of Education's strategies also include symbolic acts that ostensibly enhance the school trustee's position in relation to his own. In addition to the practical benefits stemming from consultation, the Minister's practice of meeting informally with groups of trustees has a symbolic value. This is accentuated at their assemblies where he passes as a "fellow trustee", sharing confidences as to probable educational developments and honouring the audience by utilizing the occasion to publicly announce government policy changes.

A final category of reward available to those in the lower range of the collective bargaining power hierarchy are those which are simultaneously material and symbolic. These pertain to the social amenities surrounding involvement in collective bargaining locally. They include opportunities to take advantage of mileage and expense claims, to participate in dinners and social events, to attend workshops and seminars, and to associate with others who enjoy access to restricted spheres of influence in the order.

Conclusion #5

> *The sponsored order is arranged in such a way as to generate a strain toward docility and acquiescence on the part of those at the order's lowest extremities for whom its material and symbolic rewards hold little attraction.*

Elaboration. Potential dissent from the sponsored order by those who perceive that it doesn't satisfy their interests, is mitigated by the controllers' capacity to create an impression that the individual, or the dissident group, cannot prevail against the status quo. Essentially, the attitude is cultivated that, "It's too late to do anything at the school board level now," or "These matters can only be settled at a higher level, because we do not have the power." This state of mind is engendered by the provincial authority's paternalism which removes effective fiscal responsibility from school boards and is condescending in its regulation of other facets of school board operation. The overweening provincial presence in school board collective bargaining is reinforced by the pervasive influence of a highly centralized provincial teachers' association, and a school trustees' association attempting to rival the latter.

Conclusion #6

Impression management by provincial authorities and political interest groups is crucial to control over school board collective bargaining outcomes.

Elaboration. School boards enjoy the legal prerogative to negotiate collective agreements with the ATA. Theoretically, each school board may, for example, agree to remuneration rates that have no parallel elsewhere. What transpires in effect however, is a set of teacher collective agreements that, throughout the province, are notable for their commonalities rather than their differences. This outcome may not be totally surprising in view of labour's propensity to rely on comparability as a lever for winning concessions from its employers, and also in view of the nature of items included in Alberta teachers' collective agreements.

Nevertheless, the influence emanating from groups located in the "backstage" or provincial-level interaction sphere is consequential for setting parameters on the range within which comparability is locally applied. School trustees have opportunity to be apprised of national, provincial, and local economic developments. However, the most potent cue is that transmitted from the provincial government and which substantially determines the funds available to school boards for financing a particular collective agreement. These financial cues constitute a distillation of broader economic developments. They have been modified to accommodate to the respective goals of the provincial government and the political interest groups with which it negotiates. School boards are provided with a yardstick bearing an aura of legitimacy, against which they can evaluate teacher bargaining table demands, while justifying their own offers. During a period when unprecedented inflation undermines traditional rationality, this expectation-generating device is instrumental in creating a "hedge" against anarchy threatened by apparently exhorbitant wage and salary demands originating in other economic sectors.

While this tactic reinforces the sponsored order's capacity to resist destructive elements, it further enhances its control over the participants at the lower range in the power hierarchy. Firstly, it militates against viable local bargaining by virtually predetermining outcomes. In other words, it diminishes the capacity and incentive for local school board negotiators to strive for bargains on teacher contracts that effect cost economies. Secondly, it overshadows other events and saps confidence of the local trustee in his/her own capacity to make tough decisions. It simultaneously enhances the image of the provincial-level authorities as the repositories of greater expertise, far-sightedness, and competence. This illusion of omnipotence is particularly striking at least in so far as decision making on financial matters is concerned. The provincial government's reluctance to allow local school boards an opportunity to engage freely in collective bargaining with all its financial risks entailed, creates psychological dependency on the central authority. Self reliance is further diminished as a result of school boards' experience with conciliation.

Conclusion #7

Existing statutory dispute settlement mechanisms encourage school boards to prolong collective bargaining with the Alberta Teachers' Association, while providing both parties with incentive to embark upon dispute inducing behaviour.

Elaboration. The Conciliation mechanism prescribed in The Alberta Labour Act requires that both school boards and the ATA desist from strikes and/or lockouts until disputes have been investigated and reported publicly. Both parties are subjected to intensive pressure from government even when they do exercise the legal prerogative to fight a contract dispute to the point that a work stoppage ensues. Conciliation reports and arbitrated settlements have aroused the expectation that "Conciliation escalates the school board's last offer." Meanwhile conciliation reports and arbitrated settlements almost invariably include less than the ATA requests.

Consequently, collective bargaining between the ATA and school boards reflects the participants' presumption that the dispute settlement procedure, if approached carefully, can be used to enhance prospects of a favourable settlement. For school boards therefore, conventional wisdom dictates that unless the teachers "really want" to settle, the board should desist from offering concessions that it might detract from possible "Conciliation gains." Conciliation and arbitration might subsequently prove the concession in question to be too generous. Similarly, the ATA is discouraged from agreeing too readily lest it sacrifice in its haste the possibility of getting more.

Moreover, although Conciliation is, in statutory terms, a possible eventuality, the participants' perceptions of its ramifications make it almost an inevitability. Their perceptions encourage dispute-provoking behaviour at the bargaining table. This conduct consists of more than a reluctance to yield a final concession. It permeates school board collective bargaining strategy from the outset. That is to say, school board negotiators calculate their initial offers and subsequent concessions in such a way that the public and the dispute investigator will be impressed. Original offers are not so low as to allow the ATA scope for arousing public indignation. Nevertheless, an original salary package should be sufficiently conservative to ensure that the fact finder's presumed "saw off" between the school board's low position and the ATA's high position will be at least adequate for the school board's budgetary purposes. Concessions must also be extended which, in a school board conciliation board submission, do not reflect tokenism without compromising possible "saw off" advantages.

Occasionally, school board negotiators remark that "conciliation officers don't operate that way any more." The implication is that the conciliation officer, acting as a fact finder rather than an assessor of an arbitratable position, would be more impressed by a "just" school board salary offer. Their subsequent bargaining table strategies however, suggest that the school board negotiators are remarking on an ideal rather than describing their perceptions of "what is."

Conclusion #8

Contrary to the popular notion, school boards and teachers may not be demonstrating ineptitude or unreasonable stubbornness by *frequent refusal to agree without demanding prior third party intervention.*

Elaboration. As was mentioned previously, punitive action by school boards and teachers with respect to the strike/lockout is proscribed by law until after Conciliation. Moreover, Conciliation is frequently prolonged and demanding. School boards and teachers who insist on placing themselves in strike situations are also subjected to intensive political pressure to desist from such confrontation. Nevertheless, school boards and teachers frequently resort to Conciliation. They knowingly court provincial displeasure with their work stoppage threats and strikes. The nature of government annoyance at such apparent unreasonableness is indicated in this study's initial question. The question stated in the introduction implies that school boards and teachers are displaying ineptitude and/or unreasonableness by the frequency with which they seek civil service and Legislative intervention prior to contract settlement.

When acting in this manner however, school boards and teachers calculate their respective strategies in accordance with perceptions of the government's interest. These perceptions have been formulated on the basis of previous experience with government administration of Conciliation. School boards have developed an awareness that the government prefers strikes to be postponed almost indefinitely. Furthermore, they are convinced that the Alberta government will not tolerate lengthy teacher strikes and that its preferred solution is an arbitrated settlement. Their experience indicates that government appointees, whether acting in the capacity of conciliator, mediator, or arbitrator, will attempt to "buy" industrial peace with a "saw off" or "something for both parties." Consequently, school board negotiators are acting rationally when they go to

Conciliation, or to an arbitrator in a strike situation. Underlying their action is the inevitable prospect of getting a deal that is "a little better." Moreover, government intervention supplies school board negotiators an excuse for disowning responsibility for particularly distasteful bargaining outcomes. In other words, the conflict and the contract outcomes can be disowned as "products of government intrusion on school board autonomy."

In summary therefore, the existing educational funding arrangements and the Conciliation mechanism in The Alberta Labour Act serve the interests of those who command responsibility for ordering collective bargaining between school boards and teachers. That is to say, the provincial government, the ATA, and the ASTA, benefit from the order which allows them to reach mutual accommodation in setting relatively clear limits for local collective agreements. The provincial government habitually criticizes local school boards and ATA locals for failing to act responsibly within this provincially-ordered and monitored framework. In so doing, its officials overlook the motivators which they have built in to the order. They fail to recognize that school boards are exercising rationality (from a local perspective) in taking advantage of Conciliation's rewards.

Periodically, the Minister of Education issues a plea that school boards and teachers "get together" locally to resolve their differences in pre-negotiation discussions. Conciliation and the educational funding arrangements stand as disincentives for the success of such deliberations. Moreover, the chance for positive outcomes is mitigated further by counterproductive outcomes stemming from the contract settlement ritual itself. It undermines morale and circumvents local initiative for collaborative organizational activity. These aspects receive examination in the following paragraphs.

Conclusion #9

The systematic emphasis upon work stoppage postponement and proscription, as well as the primacy which Conciliation invests in the "saw off", militates against conflict resolution and a positive labour relations climate in local school board organizations.

Elaboration. Collective bargaining is a process conceptually distinct from dispute settlement (Williams 1971). Its appeal as a decision making device resides with the notion that two parties pool resources in an endeavour to establish working relationships based on mutuality of interest. Presumably, they search for common grounds for agreement, and once having made a bargain, manifest a moral commitment to that agreement. Collective bargaining's proponents claim therefore, that it is superior to compulsory arbitration where parties may disown moral commitment to an externally imposed settlement.

As described in the previous pages, collective bargaining is legally bound to a dispute settlement mechanism. The latter manifests many qualities of arbitration even where fact finding is its apparent objective. That is to say, the "saw off" is perceived as the conciliators' predominant motive. The aim of third party intervention seems to be a search for a solution that gives "something to each side." School board negotiations proceed on the expectation that some type of "quasi-judicial" hearing will eventuate. Consequently, instead of searching for evidence that will minimize differences (as is the collective bargaining ideal), school boards and teachers accentuate their differences. Instead of addressing each other for the purpose establishing mutuality of interest, they are encouraged to speak to each other in language that is calculated to impress others, but not necessarily their bargaining table counterparts. In this courtroom-like setting school boards develop strong arguments to impress the conciliator, the mediator, the arbitrator, and the public. In so doing, they may speak to impress the teachers. However, in this circumstance they seek to impress the teachers with respect to the school board's chance of "winning" (and the teachers' prospects of "losing"). The dispute settlement procedures are therefore more devisive than reconciliatory.

The "winners-losers" syndrome is dysfunctional in several other respects. In the first place it militates against conciliator and arbitrator flexibility. That is to say, because the teachers may claim to have "won" with a particular conciliator, mediator, or arbitrator, that individual's credibility suffers. His/her future effectiveness as intermediary in school board collective bargaining disputes is compromised by suspicion engendered among school trustees. The situation is no different should that individual be recognized as a "school board man". The net effect is to create wariness in the ranks of conciliation officers, mediators, and arbitrators. This reinforces the "something for each party" approach. It may also lead to "balancing out" where last year's "winner" is expected to be this year's "loser". Where this expectation prevails, both "winners" and "losers" may calculate their strategies to take advantage of the assumed inevitability.

A second counter-productive effect of the "winners-losers" syndrome adversely effects labour-management relations. It penetrates deeper within local school organization than merely to salary-related matters. It may undermine the school organization's total decision making effectiveness. The untoward effect occurs and is perpetuated in, the annual drive to mobilize members of the ATA local and the local school board, not so much for collective bargaining as for the litigation-like hearings that accompany dispute settlement. Mobilization may entail creation of gross caricatures of the "opponents" and their bargaining table positions.

These gross images may not easily dissolve subsequent to a settlement being reached, particularly insofar as the "losers" are concerned. Moreover, mobilization to "fight" particular contract issues in Conciliation frequently entails accentuation of group solidarity and apparent irrevocable commitment. A sense of betrayal may linger with trustees and teachers who fail to understand that these inflated expectations are more ritualistic than substantive, and who perceive the eventual contract as a "sell-out" by their colleagues, or a partisan intrusion by government. In such cases, the contract may be disowned as not requiring any form of moral commitment concerning its successful application to daily working activities. These debilitating outcomes are self-reinforcing. They weaken morale and mutual trust between teachers, school board administrators, and school trustees. Collaborative action on school board policy formation is impaired. Matters that might otherwise be amicably resolved through informal consultation are more likely to be propelled into the more volatile collective bargaining and dispute settlement arena.

III IMPLICATIONS

In the discussion of alternative sociological paradigms in Chapter two reference was made to the "two sociologies" outlined by Dawe (1970). He described the traditional perspective on organizations as being a derivative of the sociological "doctrine of order." This he labelled "the sociology of a social system." Dawe contrasted its emphasis upon the concepts of central value system, structure, function, equilibrium, and structural differentiation, with an alternative sociology to which he gave the label "Action". Its central focus is the "problem of control." Of this he (1970:212) remarks:

> Action constitutes an unceasing attempt to exert control over existing situations, relationships and institutions in such a way as to bring them into line with human constructions of their ideal meanings.

In other words, in expressing his belief that the latter is more appropriate than the former as a sociological perspective, he is asserting the existence of social order as a product of human imposition of meaning on actual situations. Meanwhile, he is rejecting the traditional perspective that emphasizes supra-human forces such as those presumed to operate in organic systems models. The evidence of this study suggests the plausibility of Dawe's thesis with respect to the problem of control. It demonstrates that the organization of education collective bargaining is explainable in terms other than those of a systems perspective. Moreover, the dramaturgic and the game metaphors offer plausible explanations for outcomes that, within the systems framework, are explainable only in terms of flaws in the participants' capabilities.

The study has also demonstrated the value of the dramaturgic and game models insofar as these perspectives facilitate understanding of ritual, ceremony, and symbols, in modern organizational settings. In rational, mechanistic models these factors are not easily accommodated. They tend to be disregarded as unimportant, or looked upon with disfavour as obstacles to effectiveness and rational action. The dramaturgic and game frameworks imply that, while the ritual and ceremony may be time consuming they may also be important facilitators of action and control. That is to say, the impressions which people form on the basis of commitment to symbols and ritualistic trappings may be as important as objective facts in accounting for their actions. A case-in-point in the current labour relations domain is the problem associated with inflation psychology and the government's attempts to alter labour's expectations with respect to future price increases, as well as its expectations with respect to limits to material prosperity.

The emphasis placed upon the notion that the education collective bargaining organization is essentially a controlled order should not be constructed as a cynical critique of the current state of labour-management relations in education. The thesis does not argue that such control ought not, or should not exist. It merely asserts that organizations are controlled by individuals and groups acting upon certain ideologies and imposing preferred meaning sets on other individuals and groups. The latter, within more restricted parameters, may also exercise control and discretion. In other words, collective bargaining problems in the Alberta education setting are not posited as malfunctions "in the system." They are explained as flaws in an organized pattern that is the product of human initiative to extract compliance from other humans. The source of the problems resides not with some defect in human capacity to adapt to a systematic force, but with the capacity of individuals and groups to induce compliance with their own particular preferred objectives and meanings.

The latter suggests that insight on the nature of power and authority, as it is exercised in educational organizations, should become the subject of focus for scholars in educational administration. For example, organizational change in the education setting can not be countenanced merely in terms of an institution's or a school board's capacity to adapt automatically to inputs from its environment. Educational administrators, in addition to being sensitive to environmental conditions, will need to develop sensitivity to the organizational settings where power is wielded. They will require interaction strategies that can be applied at these sites in order to overcome resistance to change, or to facilitate the use of power by those individuals and groups amenable to change.

The conclusions with respect to the imposed collective bargaining order also suggest warnings for educational administrators. The Alberta example reveals that the ordering of school board collective bargaining outcomes has been such as to satisfy the need for relative stability in finance and politics at the provincial level. However, the school trustees and teachers who are located at the order's lower extremities may be bearing the cost of these accomplishments. As the provincial imprint on local collective bargaining outcomes becomes increasingly apparent, loyalty to the collective bargaining ritual and its symbolic trappings may erode to a point where these entities feel divested of any power to control their own destinies. As was suggested in an earlier paragraph, this feeling of local powerlessness may be more persuasive than the argument to the contrary which provincial authorities claim is substantiated by The School Act's provisions respecting local autonomy. For employees, the feeling that they no longer have power to control the substance of collective agreements and that school boards are relatively powerless to do the same, may be equally debilitating for their morale. In essence, the study suggests that efficient control of education collective bargaining at the macro-level may be undermining working relationships and the viability of educational administration locally.

A further item that warrants greater consideration by scholars in educational administration is that pertaining to personality and its role in the control of organizations. Traditionally, educational administration research has eschewed interest in the psychological dimensions of behaviour. Instead, it has focused upon the social forces that estensibly determine personality. In Personality and Politics (1974). Greenstein discusses the relative merits of sociological versus psychological explanations of political behaviour. He makes a convincing case for the latter in particular social situations. The evidence produced by research in the Alberta education collective bargaining setting indicates that this is a relevant venue for the study of the impact of personality. In the first place, the study suggests that particular personality types may correspond with the typology of performers identified in Chapter 8. Personality also seems to comprise a crucial element in specific bargaining table situations, bearing not so much on contract outcomes as upon a climate of relationships that effects day-by-day operations of particular school jurisdictions. Finally, personality may be an important element in the willingness of particular school trustees, administrators, and teachers, to invest confidence in, and allegiance to, the symbols and ceremonies of the collective bargaining order.

All these matters further imply the need for diversification and experimentation in educational administration research. Shortcomings in the traditional reliance upon scientific empiricism have already been argued in Chapter two. Field research in collective bargaining is but one means of focusing on interaction patterns which this study suggests constitute an appropriate focus for future research in educational administration. Other methodologies are needed which afford opportunity to more closely scrutinize these events. Laboratory work and analysis of electronically recorded data is implied therefore. Prerequisite to the use of these two methodologies must be greater educational administrator sensitivity to the importance of language. Administrator preparation in the fields of anthropology and psycho-linguistics would seem imperative as means for developing analytical capabilities and research resourcefulness.

The final three conclusions presented in the previous section cast serious doubts upon the efficacy of dispute settlement mechanisms incorporated in provisions of The Alberta Labour Act. Conciliation inflexibility contributes to dysfunctional education collective bargaining outcomes. Rigidity and predictability are consequences of several factors. In the first place, dispute settlement is legally tied to collective bargaining. Consequently, school boards must postpone lockouts and teachers must postpone strikes until the Conciliation mechanisms is exhausted. This raises a second factor of importance. The politicians and civil servants who are responsible for administration of the labour statute are so predictable in their actions that school boards' negotiators have little trouble in calculating strategies to take advantage of Conciliation. These deliberate calculations have disadvantages for which administrators have sought remedies with relatively little success. Essentially, these dysfunctional outcomes were identified as protracted bargaining, unwillingness to bargain locally in good faith, and deteriorating labour-management relations in the local school board organizational setting.

This situation suggests a need for the insertion of greater ambiguity with respect to the precise form dispute settlement might take. In the extreme, it suggests reappraisal of the necessity of the existing link between collective bargaining and dispute settlement. In other words, teachers and school boards might approach collective bargaining with greater urgency if the strike/lockout rights became legal at the expiration of a current collective agreement.

Secondly, the situation might well be improved if considerably more flexibility were exercised in applying Conciliation. A relatively more serious approach to local bargaining might ensue if conciliators and arbitrators were encouraged to select a particular party's bargaining position if it clearly merited selection, instead of trying to write reports that "give something to both sides." The example that might encourage civil servants and government appointees to display such initiative would have to be set at the highest political levels. That is to say, the Minister holding the labour portfolio might demonstrate more flexibility in interpreting the Conciliation provisions of The Alberta Labour Act.

This orientation would make unprecedented demands upon the Minister's leadership talents. Furthermore, this suggestion implies a significant increase in discretionary power available to the Minister and the Board of Industrial Relations. In 1973 the Conciliation process was changed to allow three alternatives in the event of disputes arising in collective bargaining. Others, such as the right to order final offer selection arbitration might productively be added. A more stern alternative to be used at the Minister's discretion would be the power to invoke compulsory arbitration prior to a work stoppage, but after protracted collective bargaining. The Minister might also be extended the power to withhold the right to strike pending fact finding. The latter renders that which is now compulsory and predictable, discretionary and uncertain. These suggestions are premised on the notion that while the school boards and teachers remained uncertain as to which action the Minister might chose to take (and, he would in some cases be serving a positive function by desisting from intervention), they would be encouraged to proceed expeditiously to resolve their mutual differences.

Further Research Required

1. Further field research, as well as initiation of research in a laboratory setting should explore the phenomena of bargaining and dispute settlement more directly. Flexibility in applying the latter appears crucial. The capacity for discretionary action possesses at least two dimensions. One concerns the possibility of invoking an array of alternative impasse resolution devices. The other focuses upon dimensions of personality and personal style in the application of this array to emergent disputes. Outside the laboratory setting, the second factor suggests the need to ascertain the nature and extent of political interest group interaction that underlies current administration of the Conciliation procedure outlined in The Alberta Labour Act.

2. This study emphasizes the importance of impression management and creation of particular images in the minds of potential followers and

exploitees, by would-be controllers of organizational activity. While these symbols and rituals may serve to enhance achievement and order in the collective bargaining situation, they may be counterproductive in so far as the overall education enterprise is concerned. Research is required on the extent to which collective bargaining oriented images influence, for example, the outcome of plans and programs designed by administrators to enhance the quality of education.

3. During the course of observation, the researcher encountered considerable divergence in the extent to which school superintendents engaged in their school board's collective bargaining activity. Following the switch from provincially-employed to locally-employed chief executive officers during the past decade, individuals occupying this office have been forced to reconstruct the traditional relationships surrounding this office. Not only have many found themselves in a new collective bargaining role insofar as relations with the ATA are concerned, but furthermore, they have to cope with increased militancy among non-professional staff organized into Canadian Union of Public Employee locals for purposes of collective bargaining. Among the many facets of this changing role of the superintendent of schools that warrants inquiry, is the extent to which graduate schools provide professional preparation appropriate to collective bargaining exigencies.

4. In the nineteen seventies, collective bargaining between school boards and the ATA underwent an important structural transformation when many rural jurisdictions formed employers' associations. Meanwhile, other jurisdictions of similar size and composition exercised their right to bargain as independent units. Moreover, during the same period, collective bargaining by Saskatchewan school boards and teachers underwent

a transition that culminated in both provincial level and local level bargaining. In view of the increased centralization of fiscal control noted during the course of this study, as well as the interest manifested by many of its respondents with respect to provincial level collective bargaining as a prospect for Alberta education collective bargaining, evaluation of local-regional-provincial alternatives would be timely.

5. Work stoppages by Alberta teachers have been terminated by the government when they are discerned to incur "extreme privation or human suffering" (The Alberta Labour Act, Sec. 163). Meanwhile, upon extending collective bargaining rights to its teaching force, the Province of Ontario enacted legislation in 1975 that established an Education Relations Commission, one purpose of which is to render opinion as to untoward effects of teacher strikes upon students' academic prospects. A study which provides empirical data on this aspect of the teacher work stoppage is potentially useful in several respects. In the first place, it may provide a rationale for third party intervention in teacher strikes. Secondly, should it focus upon instances wherein governments actually invoke this statutory right, such an investigation promises further insight on imposed frames of reference, as well as a venue for testing the game analogy.

6. Finally, this study explored only one facet of the game model, namely that where exploitation was the basic motive for play. Moreover, it was tested at the interorganizational level where, according to the dramaturgic conceptual framework, participants enjoy a capacity for exercising power in shaping collective bargaining outcomes produced at lower levels in the power hierarchy. Such is not to imply however, that

the onstage performers are powerless to define and pursue creatively their objectives within certain parameters. Further study is required, applying the game model to interaction between particular school boards and teacher locals, as well as within the respective entities.

7. The collectivity variously identified in common parlance as "ratepayers", "local voters", or "the public", are depicted as resembling an audience in this study. This analogy suggests that the public and public opinion may play a role in collective bargaining matters that differs somewhat from that traditionally ascribed to both. For example, since the enactment of The Industrial Disputes Investigation Act in 1907, public policy in Canadian federal and provincial jurisdictions has relied extensively on the notion that the weight of an informed public opinion is an important factor inducing parties to resolve their differences in labour disputes. Accordingly, statutory Conciliation mechanisms consist of impasse investigation followed by publication of findings, while disputants are precluded from taking strike or lockout action. In Systems terms, public opinion is regarded as an input. It is conceptualized as a constraint upon labour's and management's bargaining power.

The dramatic analogy does not reject the notion that collective bargaining participants may have to curtail their actions to accommodate to certain perceptions of that which the public will accept. By its nature however, it accentuates the potential influence which the parties may exert over public opinion just as actors exercise stagecraft to weave a spell and transport theatre patrons into a different "world". This implies something qualitatively different from that suggested in the language of cybernetics and feedback. It indicates the need for further investigation to establish empirically the extent to which the public opinion which ostensibly forces negotiators to reconsider their commitments, is perhaps an artifact whose form may be sunstantially attributable to the exercise of power by individuals and groups located elsewhere in the collective bargaining spectacle.

In conclusion, the notion that collective bargaining organization in the Alberta education sphere represents control imposed by particular entities over others who cannot muster the power to resist compliance, does not necessarily imply conspiracy or underhandedness. It is asserted for the purpose of explaining events and outcomes that cause bewilderment when considered in the more traditional conceptual contexts. Moreover, because it countenances human intentionality, skill, and resourcefulness, as critical elements underlying capacity to impose compliance (or, on the other hand, to resist exploitation), the conceptual framework would seem to be more amenable to the purposes of those who pursue learning for the sake of developing organizations that manifest "humanistic" qualities. Not only does the emphasis on central meaning and control afford opportunity to plumb the depths of interaction in which power is exercised, but furthermore it provides timely opportunity to explore the possible debilitating effects upon individuals, organizations, and society, where controlling interests, albeit unintentionally, create situations in which others perceive themselves to be transfixed by feelings of inadequacy, insignificance, and powerlessness. At the other end of the scale, consequences equally dire are threatened in circumstances where control becomes so brittle as to generate disaffection. Between these two extremes, this study's conceptual framework and analysis suggests scope for rejuvenated interest in leadership as a means for combatting malaise in current organizational, as well as societal, settings.

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APPENDIX

APPENDIX

OPINION ON ISSUES ARISING IN SCHOOL BOARD-TEACHER RELATIONS

Office held by respondent:	53 []	School trustee (75.7%)
(Check all those which apply)	6 []	Director (or Alternate) of a S.A.A. (8.6%)
	0 []	Spokesman at bargaining table (00.0%)
	5 []	Superintendent of Schools (7.1%)
	6 []	Secretary-Treasurer (8.6%)
	70	Total

Please indicate the strength of your opinion on the following matters by placing a check mark [ ] in one of the spaces provided under each statement.

1. Teachers should have the right to bargain collectively.

	Strongly agree [ ]	Agree [ ]	Neutral [ ]	Disagree [ ]	Strongly disagree [ ]
Freq.:	2	8	1	46	11
Tot.%	2.9	11.4	1.4	65.7	15.7

2. Collective bargaining, when permitted, should be limited to salary matters only.

	Strongly agree [ ]	Agree [ ]	Neutral [ ]	Disagree [ ]	Strongly disagree [ ]
Freq.:	6	17	5	32	9
Tot.%	8.6	24.3	7.1	45.7	12.9

3. Collective bargaining, when permitted, should include any items not covered by law.

	Strongly agree [ ]	Agree [ ]	Neutral [ ]	Disagree [ ]	Strongly disagree [ ]
Freq.:	5	29	9	18	3
Tot.%	7.1	41.4	12.9	25.7	4.3

4. Teachers should have the right to strike.

	Strong Agree [ ]	Agree [ ]	Neutral [ ]	Disagree [ ]	Strongly disagree [ ]
Freq.:	19	30	5	14	2
Tot.%	27.1	42.9	7.1	20.0	2.9

5. Principals should be covered by the teachers' collective agreement.

	Strongly agree [ ]	Agree [ ]	Neutral [ ]	Disagree [ ]	Strongly [ ] disagree
Freq.:	15	31	6	16	0
Tot.%	21.4	44.3	8.6	22.9	00.0

6. During a strike, the Minister of Education should withhold from school boards, that portion of school grants which would normally be applied to teacher salaries.

	Strongly Agree [ ]	Agree [ ]	Neutral [ ]	Disagree [ ]	Strongly [ ] disagree
Freq.:	18	29	9	12	1
Tot.%	25.7	41.4	12.9	17.1	1.4

7. The Minister of Labour should exercise the power to terminate teacher strikes

	Strongly Agree [ ]	Agree [ ]	Neutral [ ]	Disagree [ ]	Strongly [ ] disagree
Freq.:	1	4	2	31	31
Tot.%	1.4	5.7	2.9	44.3	44.3

8. School boards and teachers should negotiate locally without assistance or advice from A.T.A. or A.S.T.A.

	Strongly Agree [ ]	Agree [ ]	Neutral [ ]	Disagree [ ]	Strongly [ ] disagree
Freq.:	14	20	5	22	9
Tot.%	20.0	28.6	7.1	31.4	12.9

9. Only when a strike is imminent or actually occurs, do members of the public express concern to school trustees about collective bargaining.

	Strongly Agree [ ]	Agree [ ]	Neutral [ ]	Disagree [ ]	Strongly [ ] disagree
Freq.:	3	8	9	32	17
Tot.%	4.3	11.4	12.9	45.7	24.3

10. The A.S.T.A. should have more power to control the way school boards conduct collective bargaining.

	Strongly Agree [ ]	Agree [ ]	Neutral [ ]	Disagree [ ]	Strongly [ ] disagree
Freq.:	6	21	9	26	7
Tot.%	8.6	30.0	12.9	37.1	10.0

REASONS FOR ACCEPTING THE MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

Priority Considered N = 70

	First	Second	Third	Unspecified Priority	Not Checked
The settlement fits within the board's budget					
Freq.:	27	5	1	13	24
Tot.%	38.6	7.1	1.4	18.6	34.3
Agreements in other School Authorities are similar.					
Freq.:	7	15	7	17	24
Tot.%	10.0	21.4	10.0	24.3	34.3
My Director recommends acceptance.					
Freq.:	6	4	2	18	40
Tot.%	8.6	5.7	2.9	25.7	57.1
The Settlement is close to the Minister of Education's spending guidelines.					
Freq.:	2	5	7	19	37
Tot.:	2.9	7.1	10.0	27.1	52.9
My electors favour acceptance					
Freq.:	0	2	2	10	56
Tot.%	00.0	2.9	2.9	14.3	80.0
This agreement may secure the teachers' goodwill					
Freq.:	1	1	3	18	47
Tot.%	1.4	1.4	4.3	25.7	67.1
There are benefits for school boards in this agreement.					
Freq.:	4	5	6	13	42
Tot.%	5.7	7.1	8.6	18.6	60.0
The teachers may strike if the memorandum is rejected.					
Freq.:	1	1	0	14	54
Tot.%	1.4	1.4	00.0	20.0	77.1
Neighbouring independent counties and school districts have negotiated similar agreements.					
Freq.:	3	9	5	25	28
Tot.%	4.3	12.9	7.1	35.7	40.0

The taxpayers are enjoying prosperity this year.

Freq.:	0	1	1	10	58
Tot.%	00.0	1.4	1.4	14.3	82.9

The new Provincial Government oil and gas revenues will help finance the cost of this settlement.

Freq.	0	3	6	12	49
Tot.%	00.0	4.3	8.6	17.1	70.0

The agreement is in line with cost of living increases faced by teachers.

Freq.	9	9	12	16	24
Tot.%	12.9	12.9	17.1	22.9	34.3

REASONS FOR ACCEPTING THE MEMORANDUM OF AGREEMENT

Directions:

1. From the following list choose those factors which you considered seriously prior to voting for acceptance of the memorandum.

2. After having checked the appropriate statements, indicate three (3) to which you attached highest priority by adding the numerals 1, 2, and 3.

Priority Considered		Suggested Factors
1,2,3		
		- The settlement fits within the board's budget.
		- Agreements in other School Authorities are similar
		- My Director recommends acceptance.
		- The settlement is close to the Minister of Education's spending guidelines
		- My electors favour acceptance.
		- This agreement may secure the teacher's goodwill.
		- There are benefits for school boards in the agreement.
		- The teachers may strike if the memorandum is rejected.
		- Neighbouring independent counties and school districts have negotiated similar agreements.
		- The taxpayers are enjoying prosperity this year.
		- The new Provincial Government oil and gas revenues will help finance the cost of this settlement.
		- The agreement is in line with cost of living increases faced by teachers.

Please write-in important factors not listed above: